

SMART SET

True Stories from Real Life

May

25
Cents



HENRY
CLIVE
/

Read
**SECOND-HAND
HUSBANDS**
By Elinor Glyn



MISS ANDERSON'S STATEMENT

When I arrived at the Kaufmann & Fabry Studio my hair was straight as you may see in the picture above. I had very little faith in any of the so-called hair-wavers and expected I would have to visit my hairdresser before keeping my other posing appointments in the afternoon. To my delight, as you will see from the center photograph, it was not necessary. My hair was perfectly waved. I have proved to my own satisfaction, that Maison Marcellers will save time, money and the bother of waiting to have one's hair marcelled. They can be worn any time which means that you may be doing useful work while the hair is being waved.

(Signed) Miss Evelyn Anderson.



NOTICE TO READERS

A Chicago representative of this magazine and representatives of over 100 other publishers witnessed a successful and satisfactory demonstration of these wavers.



KAUFMANN & FABRY CO.
Commercial Photographers

Maison de Beauté,
Chicago, Illinois.

I, Edward J. Cook, hereby certify that these are actual photographs taken by me while Miss Evelyn Anderson's hair was marcelled with Maison Marcellers. The one at the left shows Miss Anderson's hair as she entered my studio. That at the right shows the Maison Marcellers in place. The center photograph shows Miss Anderson's hair as it appeared 30 minutes later.

Signed, Edward J. Cook.

Subscribed and sworn to before me
this 24th day of March, 1926.

Emma W. Stolzenbach,
Notary Public.

Yours . . . The Loveliest Marcel Imaginable

Just 30 minutes—once a week—at home

BE FREE—free from slavery to your hair, from the tyranny of the hot iron, the expense of the beauty shop, the inconvenient "appointments"

Of course you're weary of your unceasing slavery to your hair. You are sick of the endless round of beauty shop appointments, the indifferent operators, the difficulty of appointments, the disastrous results of hot irons, the tedious process of the "permanent," the bother of water waves, the constant expense.

But, more than ever, you know how imperative it is to keep looking your best. "If other women can take the time and trouble, if they can afford the money, to keep their hair constantly waved, then I must, too." And you go the weary round again.

End—TODAY—the expensive, time-consuming, hair-ruining, "beauty shop" habit

Don't be a slave to hair care a minute longer. It isn't necessary. You can be immediately and permanently free from all the nuisance of hot iron marcelles, "permanents" and water waves. But that doesn't mean that you must let your hair go, that you are doomed to straight, straggly, unkempt locks. Far from it!

A More Beautiful Marcel Than You Have Ever Known

You can have the most gloriously waved hair you have ever had—a coiffure of smooth, loose, becoming waves framing your face, showing off your hair in all the beauty of its natural lustre, giving new grace to your shapely head. Just 30 minutes with the Maison Marcellers once a week—at home—gives you this marcel of unbelievable loveliness.

Think what an untold convenience it will be—never to have to step outside your home again for a wave—never to bother with appointments—never again to experience the disastrous effect of the hot iron.

A \$1.50 Marcel Saved Every Time You Use Them

You know how appallingly your waving expense mounts up—particularly in summer. Often the waves on which you have spent a dollar or more is gone before you reach home. Or a few minutes in a hot, steamy kitchen ruins it. Frequently you are forced to forego a dip in the lake, or other sport, for fear you will spoil an expensive new marcel.

The Maison Marcellers save all this expense and worry. Just the price of a marcel or two, and you are free forever from further expense. In no time at all, you have saved the price of a new hat, in but little more time, you can afford the little frock you want

—paid for out of the money saved by the Maison Marcellers.

Be the Envy of All Your Friends

Think how your friends will envy you your constant good grooming! Think what a reputation you will earn for unfailing smartness, with hair never straggly and unkempt, but always in the loveliest of soft, becoming waves!

Now you can do what you please, when you please—and have beautifully marcelled locks week in and week out. What does it matter if a hot game of tennis strangles your locks? Thirty minutes with the Maison Marcellers—just the time it takes you to bathe and change into fresh clothes—restores your hair's glorious wave.

What if your morning is spent in heating housework? By the time you have slipped into your crisp afternoon frock your hair, thanks to your Maison Marcellers, will look as if you had just been waved by the finest operator in town.

What if you do have a last-minute invitation, just as you are washing your hair? By the time it's dry, the Maison Marcellers, slipped on in a jiffy, will have formed every strand into deep, undulating waves, smoother and more perfect than it is possible to attain by ruinous hot irons.

It Waves While You Dress

All you do is slip the Maison Marcellers on slightly dampened locks—and while you dress, your hair is waving. At the end of thirty minutes you slip the Maison Marcellers off—and your hair lies in a wave as utterly charming as the one pictured above. Does it sound too good to be true? Let your mirror decide. It will prove the almost unbelievable wonder of the Maison Marceller results.

Bring Back Your Hair's Natural Beauty

No matter how ruined your hair has been by previous waving methods, your Maison Marcellers give it a chance to regain its own soft, silky lustre. It's amazing how quickly you will find it recovering from the harmful results of its mistreatment. As you know, every time you have your hair waved by a hot iron, each tiny, fragile hollow tube of hair is bent and twisted first in one direction and then another. This constant bending back and forth soon breaks the hair off, leaving you with brittle, uneven-length hair.

Once you are freed from the tyranny of hot irons that burn, break and discolor the hair and dry the scalp, the hot blast of water-wave "setting" that makes the hair so dry and brittle, or other waving method that takes out all the life and lustre and makes the hair harsh and kinky, your hair begins to return to health and vigor. Six months of the Maison Marcellers, and you won't know your hair, so thick, even and lustrous will it have become.

Ideal for Any Type of Hair—Any Arrangement

It doesn't matter how you wear your hair, in a shingle bob, Inn Claire, horseshoe wave or pompadour, center or side part, the Maison Marcellers give it the correct line for that style. And it doesn't matter whether your hair is soft and fluffy, coarse and straight, long or short—you will have a wave that is utterly lovely.

It is the simplest thing imaginable to marcel your hair with the Maison Marcellers. Just slip them on, catch the locks in place, and slip them off again at the end of thirty minutes. Anyone can do it. You can marcel your whole head, or you can simply reset the difficult side locks or a few unruly strands in the back. You can sleep with the Maison Marcellers on, if you want. They are made of soft rubber, light and flexible, scientifically designed.

A Wonderful Offer—For a Limited Time

We know that the quickest, surest way to give this revolutionary new invention complete supremacy over all other waving methods is to place it in the hands of women who will use it. Their enthusiastic endorsement will give Maison Marcellers countrywide popularity. To safeguard purchasers who order now we guarantee to honor all orders from this advertisement at price shown. A complete set of Maison Marcellers, including a new and authentic marcel fashion chart, for only \$2.98, plus a few cents postage—a price that scarcely covers the cost of making, packing and advertising.

Send No Money—Just Mail the Coupon

Even at this special price, you need not risk a penny. Just sign and mail the coupon. In a few days, when the postman brings your outfit, just deposit \$2.98 with him (plus a few cents' postage). And when you put in your first marcel, you'll say it was the best purchase you ever made in your life, for your hair waving troubles are ended. Every time you use this outfit you'll get better and better results and you'll never have to spend your good time and money for marcel again. After you have tried this marvelous new marceling outfit for 5 days, if you are not delighted with results—if it doesn't give you the most beautiful marcel you ever had and improve your hair in every way—simply return the outfit to us and your money will be refunded quickly and cheerfully. But don't put it off. Be among the first to take advantage of this special introductory offer. Fill in and mail the coupon today!

MAISON DE BEAUTÉ

124 W. Illinois St., Chicago, Ill.

COUPON

Maison de Beauté,

124 W. Illinois St., Dept. 100, Chicago, Illinois.

Gentlemen: Please send me your newly invented marceling outfit, including Maison Marcellers, Marcel Style Chart, and complete directions which I agree to follow. I agree to deposit \$2.98 (plus postage) with the postman when he makes delivery. If the marcellers do not put a well defined wave in my hair I will return the outfit within 5 days and you are to refund the purchase price without argument or delay.

Name.....

Address.....

City..... State.....
NOTE: If you expect to be out when the postman comes, enclose \$3.10 with your order and the Marcelling Outfit will be sent postpaid.



There is no mystery about the subject of feminine hygiene

*. . . the facts are perfectly plain
concerning poisonous antiseptics*

STUDENT nurses quickly learn to look at facts in a frank, scientific way. The first thing is to understand; once the truth about a subject is known, what to do about it becomes much clearer and easier.

Feminine hygiene, like all other branches of hygiene, has in the last few years become a matter of course in the eyes of physicians, nurses and most women of enlightened families. The sole drawback has been the fact that the only genuine antiseptic-germicides available for the purpose are preparations which are caustic and poisonous.

Don't risk it

There is a *double danger* in the use of carbolic acid compounds. First, there is the danger to the woman who uses them, because the caustic nature of these compounds leads in many cases to a hardening

and deadening of the delicate membranes and even to a subsequent area of scar-tissue. Second, there is the danger of accidental poisoning, especially with little children in the house.

Zonite, extremely powerful —and no danger

Imagine, then, the relief among the well-informed when the discovery of Zonite was announced. Zonite is by all odds the most remarkable anti-septic-germicide ever developed.

Though a deadly enemy to disease-germs, it is harmless to human beings.

Dental surgeons are recommending Zonite widely for use in the mouth and are so using it in their own families. Think of a powerful germicide that can actually be held in the mouth in a pure, undiluted state.

And Zonite is powerful. To compare

it with another *non-poisonous* antiseptic, Zonite is more than forty times as effective as, for instance, peroxide of hydrogen. To compare it with a *poisonous* germicide, Zonite is far more powerful than any dilution of carbolic acid that can be applied safely to human tissue.

No wonder, then, that both physicians and women everywhere have welcomed Zonite as the solution of the problem of feminine hygiene.

Full information in this new booklet—free

In a few small pages our Women's Division has collected probably the most complete information obtainable anywhere on the subject of feminine hygiene. Be sure to send for a copy today of the NEW edition. If you want one for a friend, send for two. Use the coupon below.



2 important statements

**Zonite
is not a
poison
Zonite
does kill
germs**

**ZONITE PRODUCTS COMPANY
250 Park Avenue, New York, N. Y.**

Use Zonite Ointment for burns, scratches, sunburn, etc. Also as a powerful deodorant in the form of a vanishing cream.

Zonite

*At all drugstores
In bottles
25c, 50c and \$1*

Full directions in every package

SMART SET

True Stories from Real Life

MAY
1927

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Cover Design Painted by Henry Clive			

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 Metro - Goldwyn - Mayer, pages 19 and 27; Pathe, pages 26 and 27; Paramount, pages 17, 18 and 35.

Next
Month



Beginning:
The Real Diary of a Real Girl
WHAT MEN WANT
A Startling Human Document

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He Tried Home-Study Training to Double His Salary—



*In seven years it multiplied
his income seven-fold!*

SEEMS too good to be true—that a man can double his income just by devoting a few spare hours each week to home-study training—

"But—maybe it is true," said B. J. Mertz to himself—and within seven years home-study training had increased his income better than 700%!

Mertz was principal of a rural high-school in Texas, at \$80 a month, when the idea came to him to enroll with LaSalle for training in Higher Accountancy.

Upon completing the course, he first took a place as Assistant Bookkeeper, in Chicago—then joined a firm of Certified Public Accountants, chiefly to get experience. Then he became Office Manager and Acting Secretary of a foundry in southern Ohio. Already—in only four years—his salary had increased 500%.

Today, he is Comptroller of the Buckeye Union Casualty Company, Jackson, Ohio, and in addition conducts a private accounting practice which brings him back the entire cost of his training every month in the year.

Why not resolve just to double your salary? Get the training—grasp your opportunities—and the future will take care of itself!

Your biggest opportunity is as near you as the point of your pencil. If you are determined to make progress, clip and mail the coupon now!

Two books placed B. J. Mertz on the path to greater earning power. They are "Ten Years' Promotion in One"—and "Accountancy, the Profession that Pays." LaSalle will send them to you free.

You want to make more money—but are you willing to do your part?

Balance the two minutes that it takes to fill out the coupon against the rewards of a successful career—then clip and mail the coupon NOW.

these
books
free



THE BUCKEYE UNION CASUALTY COMPANY JACKSON, OHIO



LaSalle Extension University,
Chicago, Illinois.

Gentlemen:

One hundred and sixty dollars a month may look small to some men, but when I enrolled with your institution for training in Higher Accountancy, it looked as big as a mountain to me. I was then principal of a rural high school in Texas, at \$80 a month.

I wanted to double my salary. That was the goal I set.

Now I find, at the end of seven years, that your training has increased my income more than 700 per cent. What is even more gratifying is the fact that I am now doing work I like and can see ahead of me a real future. Your book, "Ten Years' Promotion in One," gave me the inspiration that decided my future career.

Yours very truly,



Comptroller



Find Yourself Thru LaSalle!

LA SALLE EXTENSION UNIVERSITY, Dept. 550-R · CHICAGO

I shall be glad to have your 64-page booklet about the business field I have checked below. Also a copy of "Ten Years' Promotion in One," all without obligation.

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Higher Accountancy | <input type="checkbox"/> Business Management |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Traffic Management—Foreign and Domestic | <input type="checkbox"/> Law; Degree of LL.B. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Modern Salesmanship | <input type="checkbox"/> Modern Foremanship |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial Law | <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial Management |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Banking and Finance | <input type="checkbox"/> Railway Station Management |
| <input type="checkbox"/> C. P. A. Coaching for Advanced Accountants | <input type="checkbox"/> Personnel Management |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Expert Bookkeeping | <input type="checkbox"/> Modern Business Correspondence and Practice |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Effective Speaking | <input type="checkbox"/> Business English |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial Spanish |

Name.....

Present Position.....

Street.....

City.....

State.....

Can a Good Wife Be a Good Sport?

Prize Winning Letter Writers

SHE CAN not. That is the verdict of hundreds of SMART SET readers who answered the question, "Can a Good Wife Be a Good Sport?"

Standards of morals are not changing. Human nature is not changing. To have and to hold is as keen a desire between married people as it ever was. A wife looks upon her husband as private property and the man feels the same way about his wife—with emphasis. These are the only deductions possible from the letters received and most of the writers tore their arguments out of their own bitter experience.

First prize was awarded to a woman in South Dakota who wanted to be a good wife and tried, with disastrous results, to be a good sport. At the request of the writer her name is withheld. The letter follows:

CAN a good wife be a good sport? NO! Not and be a *good* wife.

To make my story plain, I must begin at the very beginning.

My husband was one of those tall, good looking men whom women just naturally seem to fall for—the type of man most women seem to enjoy spoiling.

Always my husband, a professional man of good standing in a busy little town of 15,000, chose for his friends those people who are known to the community at large as "fast." Both before and after prohibition, our cellar was known as one of the "seven best cellars" and people were dropping in at all hours for "just one more little drink" and under no circumstances did my husband expand as he did when dispensing hospitality by the glass full. Always too, there were women present upon whom he would lavish every attention and upon whom he called from time to time to come to the kitchen while he got some ice, or a lemon or he invented other excuses to get them alone, so he could whisper sweet things in their ears or perhaps snatch a hasty kiss or two behind the kitchen door.

During all this time, I never took a drink or allowed any of the men to do the things to me that my own husband was doing to their wives. I wasn't a "good sport" and didn't make an effort to be like other women. This went on for over a year; our quarreling getting to be an almost nightly occurrence until I was ready for peace at any price, so I decided the next time I too would drink and pet and be as disgusting as the other women and then he'd see what a mistake it was and beg me to stop. And so I started and I tried so hard to pretend I was having a good time, all the time thinking that when it was over surely he would tell me he didn't like it. But instead he took me in his arms and called me his "good little sport" and said our good times together were just starting and how proud he had been of me.

And so we drifted, until finally the thing got hold of me and I found I could no longer get a kick out of things unless I'd had a drink or two or unless I had some man on my string with whom I was carrying on an affair.

Things continued in this way for a couple of years and we were by this time the very leaders of the "fastest" and all my worth while friends had dropped us. Finally, as the result of a drinking party at our cottage at the lake, one of my "boy friends" was killed. What a sobering effect that had! After that tragedy my husband and I faced each other and decided we could not go on. Every thing that should make marriage a lovely and sacred thing has been trampled under foot by us.

So my husband, no longer a young man, left for a new field where he hopes to rebuild his practice, and I—I am back at the home of my mother, without friends or money—all because I, a *good wife*, tried to be a "good sport."

"No, most decidedly no, and I ought to know," says Mrs. Sadie L. Goldstein, of

venture, but soon I found myself becoming more and more restless, and spurred on by a wild urge to do something I had never done before—something daring, something reckless. I craved excitement, life!

In an uptown beauty shop, I met Mrs. X, a wealthy young matron, who, like myself, had lots of time to spend. We became very friendly, and she soon introduced me to her fast set. At first I was appalled but soon I found them extremely fascinating.

I entered this new life with a vengeance, and I soon reached the stage where I felt insulted if a man didn't kiss and embrace me.

I spent lavishly. Most of Jack's hard-earned money went for parties and clothes. Many times he interceded, imploring me to end this mad pursuit for thrills, but I paid no heed. In fact I upbraided him bitterly

for neglecting me, after I had worked so hard to make him successful.

I soon thought little of my husband's comfort. The duties I had loved to perform, the little things that meant so much to him were entirely forgotten. My head was turned by flattery—I lived only for these good times.

I told myself that I was free to do as I pleased; I felt independent—I liked to be called "modern." I was undoubtedly the best sport in our set.

Of course, the climax must come some day—one cannot defy convention and all the sacred ties of home and matrimony without an awakening.

One day, my husband, pale and grave, calmly informed me that we were "broke," that my carousals had caused this situation, and that he was leaving me what little was left, and going away to begin over again. I was indignant at first, but I could say nothing in my own defense.

The next day he left me, saying that he had seen me in other men's arms, had seen them kiss me, and that my cheapness had killed his love for me.

I knew that it was too late, but I begged forgiveness. I pleaded that I loved him, and would help him begin all over again. God knows I meant it, but my answer was a divorce!

He has since remarried, has a home and two children, and no doubt he is very happy.

And I, the "good sport," am merely a repentant and lonely woman, living quietly, and a far cry from the good sport I used to be.

Although, unlike the woman who relates her story to SMART SET, I became a good sport of my own free will, I want the readers who are in doubt to wait and consider. Does it pay? What is the ultimate result? And listen to the voice of conscience, for it seldom guides us into the wrong path.

Keep your marriage vows sacred and untarnished, keep your kisses for your husband and you will keep his respect, for when respect is gone, love is on its last lap.

It is absurd that any husband who loves his wife would want to share her affection with other men. Invariably, it is the man.

[Continued on page 9]

SMART SET'S PRIZE WINNERS on Can a Good Wife Be a Good Sport?

First Prize, —————, Haughton, S. D.

Second Prize, Mrs. Sadie L. Goldstein,
Boston, Mass.

Third Prize, Thos. Lanier Williams, St.
Louis, Mo.

Ten \$1 Winners

Mrs. H. I. S., Dayton, Ohio.

Carolyn Cast, Jackson, Ohio.

Beatrice Anderson, New York, N. Y.

Mrs. E. E. McCullly, San Jose, Calif.

Alice O'Hara, Fort Kent, Me.

Mrs. Elizabeth R. Seigel, Roxbury, Mass.

Mrs. M. E. Barbes, Elkins, West Va.

Mrs. Cameron Vestal, Rocky Mount,
N. C.

Edna A. Crocker, San Francisco, Calif.

Mona Deffenbaugh, Lewistown, Montana

Boston, to whom was awarded the second prize. Her experience, as told in the following letter, may be of help to other lonesome and restless wives:

NO—MOST decidedly no, and I ought to know, for I have been both a good wife and a good sport, but not simultaneously. Let me tell you my experience.

Jack and I loved each other with a love firmly built upon long years of struggle together, and numerous sacrifices. Both before and after we were married, we scrimped and saved every possible penny, for Jack was a doctor, but not a rich one.

When success finally came to us, we moved into a beautiful apartment house in the select Back Bay section of Boston.

Perhaps, it was the reaction; perhaps it was my starved soul crying for life and ad-



An actual photo of a small part of one of our nine departments

Where 1000 Young Men Are Learning Electricity By Actual Work...in 90 Days

COYNE can and does make men electrical experts in 90 days. Coyne students learn without books or lessons. They learn by doing...by actually performing every conceivable step on every type of electrical apparatus.

They learn the theory, operation and repair of storage batteries, not by looking at charts, but by actually building one complete, testing it and operating it. They learn house-wiring by actually wiring a house. Step by step, Coyne training takes you from the simplest first principles to the most complicated switch boards, great motors and power stations—always on real full-sized equipment in full operation.

In the great Coyne Shops are mammoth control boards...there are automobile chassis...here a whole roomful of illumination equipment...here farm power plants...dynamos...motors...a two-story transmitting station...and

other machinery too numerous to mention.

And here, working on the greatest outlay of electrical apparatus ever assembled, are 1,000 students from every state and every province of Canada.

You learn from men who know—men who are themselves masters of electricity. Here in this great school, every student gets individual attention. Training is intensely practical. No time is wasted and no student is ever hurried. In each department you may stay as long as you like.

The Amazing Opportunities

These are some of the reasons why Coyne men are in demand all over the country...why our Employment Department secures dozens of positions weekly and why many

graduates are earning up to \$800 a month.

The whole world of electricity is open to the Coyne trained man. He is trained completely. He can make big money as Power Plant Operator, Superintendent, Telephone Man, Construction Worker, auto, truck or tractor electrician, battery man, radio expert, or he can go into business for himself as electrical contractor, dealer, auto ignition or battery expert and make \$3,000 to \$20,000 a year.

FREE R.R. Fare to Chicago

Coyne training requires 12 weeks, and you may enter at any time. Age, lack of experience or education bars no one. Don't let lack of money hold you back. Our Employment Department will assist you to a part-time position while training. And right now our special offer pays your railroad fare to Chicago as soon as you enroll.

Get The Facts, FREE

Find out now what Coyne training can mean to you in money and future. Simply mail the coupon below for FREE Coyne catalog—56 pages of photographs...facts...jobs...salaries...opportunities in the electrical industry. This step does not obligate you. So act at once.

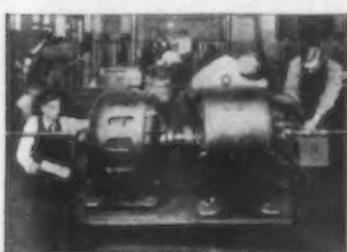
Mr. H. C. Lewis, Pres.,
COYNE ELECTRICAL SCHOOL, Dept. 57-84
1300 W. Harrison St., Chicago, Ill.

Dear Mr. Lewis:
Without obligation send me your big free catalog and all details of FREE Railroad Fare to Chicago, Free Employment Service, Free Radio and Free Automotive Courses. I understand I will not be bothered by any salesmen.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____



56 Page
CATALOG
FREE
150 Photographs



COYNE

ELECTRICAL SCHOOL

H. C. LEWIS, Pres., Dept. 57-84
1300 W. Harrison St., Chicago, Ill.
Founded 1899



*The Unhappy Story of Mary Todd,
the Woman Lincoln Loved. Told—to right a
Great Wrong—by Honore Willsie Morrow.*

Hearst's International
combined with
Cosmopolitan
May Now on Sale

150 Pieces In All \$100

DOWN

110-Piece Dinner Set

7-Piece Genuine Cut Glass Set — FREE

Extra special offer to those who hurry their order for the combination outfit shown here:—7 pieces GENUINE CUT GLASS: Pitcher of 2-qt. capacity and 6 tumblers of 9-oz. capacity. Each piece is pure, sparklingly clear, thin and dainty; hand cut decorations consisting of large floral design with appropriate foliage. A useful and handsome set. Only a limited number — so act quick.



7 Piece PURE LINEN

Complete Outfit Consists of the Following:

110 Piece Ivory Ware Dinner Set

Complete service for 12 people. Popular Ivory Ware now the vogue in rich homes. Rich, creamy ivory color. Stamped with Gold Leaf Decorations as illustrated. Newest Gloria shape. Set consists of:—12 dinner plates, 9 in.; 12 breakfast plates, 7½ in.; 12 coupe meat dishes, 6¾ in.; 12 cups; 12 saucers; 12 bread and butter plates, 6 in.; 1 oval vegetable dish, 9 in.; 1 round vegetable dish, 8¾ in.; 1 sugar bowl and cover (2 pieces); 1 platter, 11 in.; 1 platter, 13½ in.; 1 covered vegetable dish (2 pieces); 1 gravy boat; 1 gravy boat stand; 1 bowl, 1 pint; 1 cream pitcher; 1 pickle dish; 1 butter dish, 7½ in.

7 Piece Pure Linen Table Set
A large tablecloth, 54 x 70 ins. and 6 napkins, 14 x 16 in. made of Pure Linen, bleached to an attractive silver gray. Has beautiful Grecian self pattern. Will launder perfectly.

26 Piece Silver Set

as described just below illustration to the left.

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Chicago, Ill.

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SS-B-5-27

Illustration courtesy of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Pictures

Prize Winners

[Continued from page 4]

who is himself a good sport, that is "unselfish" enough to expect and encourage his wife to pet.

If I had my life to live over again, I'm sure I should be a good wife, but never, NEVER would I be a good sport!

Thomas Lanier Williams, of St. Louis, Mo., gave a rather dreary picture of the man's side of the problem and won the third prize. He writes:

CAN a woman after marriage maintain the same attitude towards other men as she held before marriage? Can she drink, smoke, and pet with them? Can she do those things which are necessary to good sportsmanship, as the term is generally applied to a girl. Those are questions of really great pertinence to modern married life.

In recounting my own unhappy marital experiences, perhaps I can present convincing answers.

Bernice was an unusually attractive girl, decidedly the flapper type. She had the gift of a quick tongue and a ready wit. I met her and fell in love with her in our mutual place of employment—a wholesale house on Washington Ave. I proposed to her across a glass-topped cafeteria table. However if a girl can accept you under such conditions as prevail in a cheap cafeteria, without the stimulus of moonlight, moonshine, or music, it would seem that her love was strong.

About a month after our marriage I obtained a position as traveling salesman, for the same firm in which I had previously been employed as a clerk.

We had rented a very pleasant little efficiency apartment and it seemed to me at first that my future was to be one of domestic bliss.

Bernice had been a popular girl, so she was naturally dissatisfied to sit at home "darning socks," as she described it. I did not at all object that she should go out reasonably often, or that she should retain her old friends—men as well as women. I reasoned that gradually she would slow down.

However the expected symptoms of slowing down did not appear. In fact, by our second year of marriage, her speed had noticeably increased. Her life seemed, almost, to be one continual stream of dates.

One week, after our third wedding anniversary, I completed my sales tour much sooner than usual. On entering our apartment after giving the customary signal, so that she would not be frightened, I found that she was not there. It was twelve o'clock—midnight. I decided that she must have been lonely and gone to spend the night with a girl friend. I went to bed, but my worry concerning her prevented me from sleeping.

It was almost daylight when I heard her key turn in the lock. I was about to arise to greet her, when I saw, through the partially open door between the bedroom and hall, that she was accompanied by a young man. She looked cautiously around the parlor. I had placed my suit-case under the bed, and there were no evidences of my return. She then permitted the man to throw his arms around her and kiss her. I was astonished and furious at this. When the man had left, I presented myself. She almost fainted when she saw me.

We were divorced a year later. As I remember "being a good sport" was exactly how she defined her actions. Being a good sport was drinking, smoking, and petting—

[Continued on page 13]

Do I Look Like the Girl They Used to Call

"Tired Tessie"?



I AM having the time of my life. I jump out of bed in the morning thoroughly rested, refreshed, strengthened, ready for whatever activities may be before me. I am on the go constantly, from eight in the morning, frequently until long past midnight. I work hard, and I play hard.

Yet I never feel tired, am never weary, never have headaches, and never suffer the petty illnesses most women think are their lot. I don't gain weight or lose weight, but retain the healthy proportions of my figure. I walk with the step of youth, I talk with the enthusiasm of a healthy mind and a healthy body, and there isn't a wrinkle, blackhead or pimple on my skin.

I am not saying this as a matter of self-praise. It is really only half the story I want to tell you. Not so many months ago I used to drag myself wearily to bed at nine o'clock, completely worn out; I was tired, worn-out, *old*. I suffered from a hundred little aches and pains which made my life miserable. I was cross, cranky, irritable. I got to be known as "Tired Tessie" because I was always too tired to enjoy dancing, or the theatre, or sports of any kind. Even reading a book tired me! At the end of each day I was limp as a rag.

I took tonics and pills recommended by well-meaning friends until I felt like a walking drug-store. The doctors advised rest, a sea voyage. They could find nothing organically wrong with me, and felt that rest alone would correct whatever trouble there was. Yet rest seemed to do me no good. You can imagine how discouraged I was.

When one feels as I did, almost anything that promises relief is welcome. And when, one day, I read the story of Annette Kellermann's life, I made up my mind that if she could become such a marvelous example of health and energy after such a discouraging start in life, at least I could regain my health by following her methods.

I read that Annette Kellermann was practically a cripple when she was a little girl; that she had worn iron braces on her feet because her bones were so soft that she had become bow-

legged, that she gave less promise of becoming the world's most beautifully-formed woman, and a most striking example of superb health, than almost anyone you could imagine.

Yet that is exactly what she accomplished. Surely, I felt, I had nothing to lose by writing to her. In reply she sent me her book, "The Body Beautiful" and agreed to let me try her methods for 10 days without the slightest risk on my part. I described to her exactly how I felt, and she then sent me her instructions. In 10 days I began to feel like a changed woman, and in a few months I could look back and laugh at my old self.

I wouldn't have believed that such a change could be made in old "Tired Tessie." Yet here I am today enjoying life to the utmost, actually getting stronger all the time, and, as my friends say, "younger and more beautiful." I wish I could shout my story from the housetops. I wish that every woman who is suffering from weakness or illness or who is losing the figure of her youth, would write to Miss Kellermann for her book, "The Body Beautiful." It tells how in only fifteen minutes a day anyone can obtain a greatly improved figure and rid herself of the pains, aches and ills which now cause her so much unhappiness. Close to 35,000 other women have already adopted Miss Kellermann's methods, and I am sure there could be no greater evidence of their effectiveness. The only warning I can give is "Do not put it off, but write at once for Miss Kellermann's book." It is sent to you free. It may mean as much to you as it has to me. Just address Annette Kellermann, Inc., Dept. 405, 225 West 39th Street, New York City.

Annette Kellermann, Suite 405
225 West 39th Street, New York City.

Dear Miss Kellermann

Please send me *The Body Beautiful* for 10 days to try. I enclose \$1.00 for postage and handling.

Name

Kathy, 123 Main St., L. I., N. Y.

City _____ State _____
Those outside the U. S. send 10c with coupon to help pay postage

"Quick! Unlock that Door!"

A MOMENT of hesitation—THEN THE
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A sudden spurt of smoke and flame—a groan—the thud of a heavy body as the Constable lurched back against the cell bars—a strange bewilderment holding the others spellbound before the tempestuous fury of this girl—and behind the locked door Jim Kent watched in tense silence, every nerve alert, every drop of blood in his body on fire.

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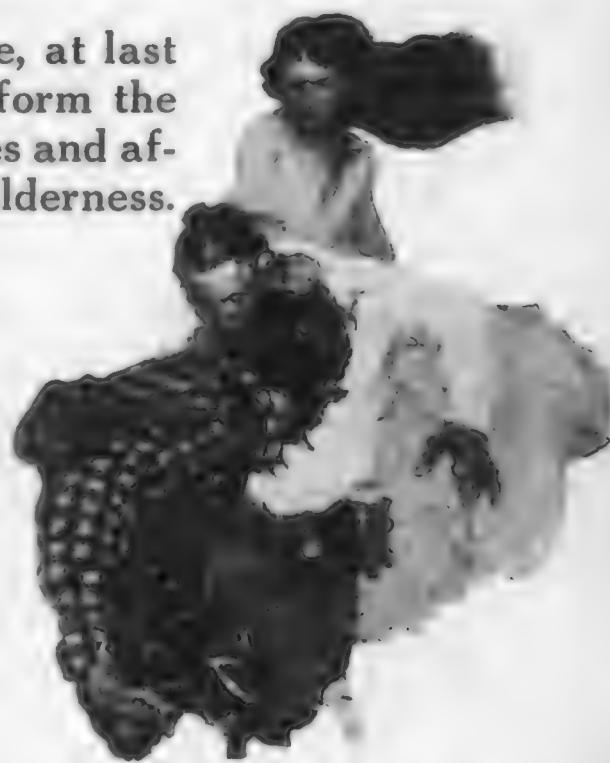
For Curwood is no "front porch" nature writer. He had spent years and has travelled thousands of miles in that country where men battle against cold and hardship and lurking dangers, sharing their adventures, living their lives, inspired by one great purpose—to take his readers into the very heart of nature, that they may know and love it as he does.

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THE MAGAZINE OF ROMANCE

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Prize Winners

[Continued from page 9]

staying up all night with the boys at cabarets—not sitting at home "darning socks."

No, I don't think that a wife can be that kind of a "good sport."

One woman thinks a good wife cannot be a good sport—not if she wants to remain good. Her letter follows:

IN ANSWER to your question, "Can a Good Wife be a Good Sport?" my reply is "No. Not if she wishes to remain good."

I have been married nearly two years and have a lovely boy of nine months. I am twenty-one and my husband is twenty-four. We love each other very much but my husband likes to flirt and wants to be popular with all the girls. I have tried and tried to stop him from this philandering but it seems to be a part of his nature.

I have thought often that I would go in for dances, parties and other good times and fall in with my husband's line of reasoning that we are too young to settle down, but have always dismissed the idea as I know I would be doing wrong and also lose his respect for me as a wife and mother and this respect I prize highly.

My husband is the kind of man who thinks a wife should be perfect, attend only to her household duties and children, instead of longing to go sporting and I quite agree with him. But I also think that a man should give up all thoughts of other women after marriage.

My husband does not lay down any hard and fast rules for me and declares that his faith in me is so firm that he would trust me anywhere and for any length of time. How I wish I could say that to him. But, if my husband ever thought I would "pet" with another man, I know he would leave me in a minute, no matter how great his love for me may be.

But no matter what he does I love him too much and respect myself and baby too much to do as he does. "Two wrongs never make a right."

I do not think that married morals are changing unless for the better and one has only to read books of English history, French, Roman, or even our first Colonial history to accept this fact. Of course there is freedom in marriage but with restrictions and not the objectionable kind that some clamor for.

Love is fundamentally based on faith and respect, is now, always has been, and always will be, and tell me what man can respect and have faith in a wife who is common property and satisfying only her own selfish interests. If such tenets were observed, the home would soon disappear and the loose days of Old Rome would return.

ON PAGE 44, of this magazine, is a contest on the "Right to Motherhood." Here is a problem old as the world, still unsolved, and today vital with a new interest and significance. In some European countries no child is illegitimate. Is that a good moral law? Should the United States ask for a similar statute? It is a big question and one upon which very many of you will want to write. On page 79 Martha Madison asks for letters on the question of "The Danger Line" for girls. Surely no question is of more importance to the free and easy young people of today. An interesting contest, in which no prizes are offered, will be found on page 34. You surely will want to write a letter in answer to the question asked there. Aleck Smart, page 86, also gives you a chance to be a poet and do some wisecracking.

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Get this straight—the American School was chartered in 1897 as an educational institution, not for profit. So you will find the same standards of service here as in the best resident schools and colleges. Over 200 of the leading Engineers, Executives and Educators of the U. S. prepared the instruction we offer. Their standing vouches for its quality.

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Your offer to send me 3 lessons free and facts about the opportunities in Drafting and about your course, looks good to me. It is understood I am not obligated in any way in making this request.

Name _____

Address _____

Occupation _____

Age _____

\$100 for Word-Makers

Win a cash prize and have a lot of fun in Smart Set's fascinating new word-test puzzle!

GRAB your pencil and put on your thinking cap. For here's a wonderful chance to play an absorbing new game and win a cash prize as well.

How many words can you make out of the letters used in the title

"SMART SET"

Use only the letters in "Smart Set" and be sure that every word is a recognized dictionary word. To show you how easy it is, here are just a few of the scores of words you can make:

tram	art	seam	mess	ram	ear
master	team	tares	start	mare	tears
smear	mart	eats	rest	stem	test

Can't you feel your fingers itch to get started? Try it—now. You'll find it amazingly interesting—and you'll be surprised how fast the words grow.

The rules of this word-test contest are given below. Please observe them closely and make sure that you conform with them.

Rules:

1. Use only letters in title "Smart Set"
2. No abbreviations permitted
3. No proper nouns
4. No duplication of letters except those duplicated in "Smart Set." i.e. "S" and "T"
5. No prefixes or suffixes unless words in themselves
6. No foreign words unless generally accepted in dictionary
7. No obsolete words
8. Contractions are permitted
9. Tenses permitted if derived from letters in "Smart Set"
10. Derivations permitted

Contest opens April 1st, closes May 1st.
Smart Set editors will be the judges and
their decision will be final. No solutions
will be returned.

Here Are the Prizes:

- \$50** to the person who sends in the largest number of words.
\$25 to the person sending the second largest number of words.
\$10 to the one sending in the third largest number of words.
\$1 to each of the next fifteen highest.

In case of a tie for first prize each of the tying contestants will receive a full amount of the award.

Come on, now. Somebody's going to get this easy money. It might as well be you. So get busy and see how many words you can list. The best time to start is NOW.

Address: Word-Test Editor

SMART SET

119 West 40th Street, New York, N.Y.



Her Father
STEPHEN ASHE
Aristocrat, lawyer,
champion of freedom



This is
JAN ASHE
who tried to live up to the
code her father taught:
*Don't interfere with other
women's men—
Don't influence the lives of
others—
Don't pretend to the man you
love—
Don't snivel if you are wal-
lopped—
Don't lie—
YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE TO
NO ONE BUT YOURSELF FOR
YOUR OWN SOUL*



Her Lover
ACE WILFONG
Professional Gambler
and an honest man—

JAN ASHE ADOPTED A PHILOSOPHY OF FREEDOM TO GOVERN HER LIFE
AND IT LED HER INTO A SITUATION OF SHAVIAN IRONY. A VIVACIOUS
AND GRACEFULLY TOLD TALE OF THE NEW FREEDOM IN THEORY—AND ACTION

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Can You UNSCRAMBLE Eggs?

MOST puzzles have to be put together. Here's one that has to be pulled apart. When you first read the paragraphs below you may think they are one story. But they aren't! The tantalizing blank spaces can be filled by selecting the proper titles from among those listed below. To make things a little more interesting the titles are *not* arranged in the same order as the paragraphs. Nor will you need to use *all* of the titles although they do appear in June SMART SET.

Which title do you think fits the first blank

IMAGINE a June afternoon whose very golden air seems mysteriously laden with romantic ardor. Imagine a swimming float and picture me stretched out upon it. Across the sparkling waters lay all the forbidden things I craved was upon me.

I WAS saying to myself, "It seems to me that when you can see with your own eyes where being good gets you and then see the janes that aren't on speaking terms with the ten commandments it's a bad day for the goody-goodies. Not for me! I'm going to be rich. I'm going to have everything in the world I want. Clothes! Furs! Jewels! And so much money that no one can ever say anything to me. So far as I can see there's only one way to get it. That's men." So I began making a study of . . .

IT didn't take me long to see that, "The bond of marriage has become irksome to thousands of good, nice members of both sexes—victims of the onrush of civilization. What is to be done about it? That is the question. Thus we catch at any new ideas of betterment, even that of . . .

THE demons of temptation fought in me when my boss offered to take me to Paris with him. Paris! Adventure! Romance! Escape from the humdrum deadliness life so often was. Just good friends if I said so. Well, lots of girls

space? And the second? And so on—Write the one you think fits best and then reread the paragraph to see if it makes sense. If it does maybe you've guessed right. The titles listed below are twelve of the twenty—and more—features you will find in June SMART SET ready May first. If you want to be sure you have filled the blanks in right tell your dealer now to save your copy of June SMART SET. The following paragraphs are taken directly from stories to which the correct titles correspond. Now we'll give you a tip. The title for the first paragraph is "June Madness."



Who Is This Girl?

Look for her picture and her amazing story in June Smart Set

in New York were getting all the good things of life and in return giving—nothing. Why couldn't I be like that? I knew . . .

. . . but two weeks later we sailed on the same ship to Paris.

THAT was how we became . . . Love is never afraid. That was the real answer but I could never tell him this. He would purposely misunderstand my motives. I knew I must suppress every sign of my true feelings for him. It would never do to give him a chance to misunderstand the slightest word or gesture on my part. Yet I am sure I would never have decided to go on with him if it had not been for the intuitive belief that my dream of love was destined to come true.

YOU will have guessed by now that I am what the world calls a wicked woman. I do not know the explanation of the appeal that such a personality makes to a man, but I do know that she is always sure to arouse curiosity and attention. I ask myself continually,

I HAVE servants of my own now. They are poor girls and they are maids simply because they are unfitted for any other kind of work. They have their good times and their beaux but I am sure they spend most of their time wondering how long it will be before marriage liberates them. I have often wished that I might sit down with them and show them the opportunities they are missing to obtain

B E L O W A R E Y O U R C L U E S

Now get out your pencil and go to it

Lottery of Love — What Money Can't Buy — Hunted Lovers — What Men Want — June Madness — Forgive Me My Trespasses — Love on Approval — I'm a Gold-Digger Wife — Appearances Were Against Me — Should I Share My Sweetheart? — Misunderstood — Do Men Prefer Wicked Women?

A Writer Who Needs No, Introduction



MADAME ELINOR GLYN

*W*HO set the pulse of the world beating faster with "Three Weeks" and "IT," begins the first of her new articles for SMART SET in this issue. Turn to the next page and read her note of warning on "Second-Hand Husbands."

By MADAME

Second-Hand



IN THESE days when divorce seems to be almost as common as marriage, the new condition of things should be looked squarely in the face. It is a sort of unwritten law in America, that no matter which is really to blame for the break, the husband is the person who must accept the stigma of being divorced by the wife. Thus, the wife has a chance to start again, "without a stain upon her character." The whole fault may have been hers; she may have been unfaithful, drunken, extravagant, violent tempered, but no

matter, the husband would be looked upon as a yellow dog if he publicly protested and asked for the law's interference. So, for the sake of getting rid of an odious partner, he is only too willing to stand accused of desertion, moral cruelty, or any other crime sufficient to allow the bond to be broken which both had sworn before God to keep "until death do us part." The whole marriage service has become a good deal of a farce, but things being as they are, and the law of the land countenancing them, they must be accepted. The sensible thing for men and women to do is to analyze the character of a divorced admirer or admired one, even more profoundly than they would were they maiden or bachelor.

WHEN a young woman meets a divorced man who attracts her, she should make it her business to find out the truth about his divorce. Did some other woman get rid of him for being a drunkard? If so, has she a chance of happiness with him or will this habit break out again as soon as the new love begins to cool? Did his divorce prove that he was a brute, capable of torturing the spirit cruelly? Yes, but was he provoked by the wife's nagging until he could not contain himself? The research should be deep, and if it proves beyond doubt that the man is meanly cruel, drunken, licentious, or vicious, then the young woman must make up her mind whether the pleasure she is going to get out of the satisfaction of her love emotion, or the gain of his riches, is going to be worth the certain knowledge that these defects will manifest themselves again. Do not let her deceive herself, but if she decides that she

wants him in any case, then it is up to her, and she must take the consequence. If he appears in every way a good fellow, then special investigation as to what sort of wife he had should be gone into. The young woman may discover that the wife was simply an impossible person, who did not understand him and made his life a burden. Then she has a very great chance of happiness because a sense of ease and gratitude will probably make him a splendid husband the second time. A divorced man is almost a safer bet



ELINOR GLYN

Husbands

than a bachelor, because he has some kind of record which can be studied; and a bachelor may turn any way!

But there is always this danger with the divorced. Their former experience renders them cunning, they have a knowledge of women or men as the case may be, which only the relation of marriage can give. They have the intimate domestic knowledge which the connection, however close, of lover and mistress never permits, because in that case, both parties are showing their most appealing sides; and in marriage, when once love cools, the most unattractive ways are manifest. But knowing female nature intimately, the divorced man may be able to play upon the little vanities of his newly desired one. He may, so to speak, be able to put over all sorts of things on her and give the most perfect false impression of himself. So the greatest caution should always be used by the young woman a divorced man may be courting. Also, when she does marry him, she will have to be very careful, if she wants to keep him in love with her, that she does not begin to do the tiresome things which the former wife did, because he will, even if it is only subconsciously, always be comparing her with his first partner. And the smallest suggestion of the same attributes coming out will disillusion him.

THE majority of women take the fidelity of men they marry for granted; they infrequently understand that man is a polygamous animal and unless his interest is kept alive he is automatically bound to be in a state ready for temptation to assail him. The only certain way to hold any man is to make him feel that he has no desire to stray. If he is physically faithful otherwise, it is either from habit, fear, laziness, or absence of sufficient temptation crossing his path. It must be a humiliating blow to a woman's pride to realize that she is holding her husband by one of these things and not because he wants to stay!

A divorced man, with his experience, is either going to be so grateful for sympathy and understanding in the second mate, that he cannot do enough for her, or he is going to become further disgusted with woman by finding his present choice demonstrates worse faults than the first!

To sum up the matter: In all marriages the characters of the individuals should have been studied on either side beforehand. A fine character will only be able to disillusion in little things, not in the main standbys of life, and a weak or bad character may be so attractive in these little superficial things that he or she has thrown glamour in the eyes of the partner who can no longer keep the faults in sight. A very



The greatest caution should always be used by the young woman a divorced man may be courting.

attractive divorced man is therefore a risky marital experiment unless his character will stand all tests.

I know a woman who had divorced her husband because he really was a brute, and afterwards she met a divorced man who had let himself be cast out to get rid of a violent tempered, extravagant spouse. It looked as if they would be perfect mates, both having been [Continued on page 105]



*Do You Believe
in Love
at First Sight?*

I Knew I

MOTHER wouldn't have let me go to the Sheik party Charlie Footner was giving in New York that night if she could have read my thoughts as I drove away from our Greenwich country place in my new sport car. I was all set for a night of romance, and adventure. To be quite honest I secretly hoped that some tremendously interesting man at the party would turn out to be a real Sheik.

There was a great chance for my hope coming true because Charlie's affairs were about the wildest staged on Park Avenue, and almost anything could, and sometimes did, happen at

them. He only gave four parties a year, one for each season, but from all I heard they certainly were wow-wows.

I waved back at mother, and turning the car out of the gate, stepped on the gas, half-afraid she might read what was in my mind, and call me back.

The traffic jam on the Boston Post Road held me up a little while, but reaching the wide, straightway stretch beyond Rye, I ran the speedometer up to the fifty mark, and thrilled to the hum of my new motor.

My anticipation of the Sheik party must have given the new



Belonged to Him

bus a thrill because it hummed and sung me into town as if twenty-five miles were a hop, skip, and a jump.

I found Claire, the girl I always parked with for overnight parties in New York, propped up in bed ordering from a menu card.

"Orange juice, one poached egg, coffee," she was telling the waiter as I burst into the bedroom.

"Good heavens, Claire! breakfast at three o'clock in the afternoon? Oh! don't bother explaining. I know you, you little rascal. Out again last night!"

"Right again, sweets," she said, kissing me. "Oh, what a party last night! Henry Smithson gave it. Started as a little dinner, and ended up in a club with a bar n'everything. The place was raided ten minutes after we left to go somewhere else. Oh! lady, lady, my head. Well, ennyhoo, coffee'll set me up. I must get well! Tonight's the night, Allien!"

"I'll say, and I'm all set to be sheiked to death," I cut in.

"Ah! the lady craves a cave-man, eh? You always did say you wanted to be run off with. Well, here's your chance." Then turning to the fat old waiter she said: "Rush up the victuals

and plenty of coffee for both of us. Romeo, toute de suite." The waiter bowed all over himself, and went out at a funny little dog trot. I laughed at the name Claire had given him. Romeo!

"Romeo's a peach. He's the best waiter in this old apartment hotel, and I've got him sold into my service, body and soul. He shoves a breakfast card under my door every morning, and never goes off duty till he's brought my breakfast up."

The phone suddenly ting-a-ling-ed.

It was my mother. She called to tell me that our luncheon appointment for the next day with Count Goushardy of Rumania was definite. Mother was going to be at Claire's apartment for me at noon sharp.

"OH, HELL!" I said, hanging up the receiver. "I've been hoping the Count would drop dead, or something. I've never laid eyes on him, but I can guess the type. One of those hand-kissing, bowing and scraping monocles. Can you beat his nerve? He's seen me, and since he met mother at a tea, he's been pestering her to death for a chance to be formally presented. Formally presented! I wonder how much it would shock him to know I'm looking for a Sheik to run off with me."

"I've heard your Count's been buzzing 'round town in all sorts of parties, and crowds. But, haven't got any low down on him 't all."

"He's no Count of mine," I insisted.

"Listen, Allien, if your mother's got anything to do with it, he'll be. You know that's her weakness, marrying you off to the titled nobility."

"Not a chance. If there was I'd declare myself. No hand-kissing, waiter-like, bowing machine for my husband."

"I'm for you, honey," she answered.

Romeo dog-trotted into the place with the victuals and coffee, and after breakfast we decided what to wear to the Sheik party. Claire's orchid taffeta with a silver bodice and my beaded midnight gown.

As a man in blue and gold livery opened the Footner door a strain of Gypsy music reached us. I caught my breath, and pulled the little black mask down more securely over my eyes.

The inner doors swung wide. The Gypsy music now filled my ears like a song that had been freed, and I began to sway with its rhythm as we were ushered into a great, high-ceilinged room.

AN IMITATION orange moon, and a handful of stars shed a mysterious amber light over the romantic scene of beautiful, masked girls in gorgeous evening dresses, and men in the gaudy robes of desert sheiks. My pulses began to throb at the thought of finding adventure and romance in such an intriguing setting, and I took the cocktail a lackey in resplendent green livery offered.

Claire and I lifted our glasses in the gesture of a toast: "To the Sheiks," she whispered. At that moment my eyes strayed over the rim of my glass, and I saw a tall man in the striped costume of an Arab chief staring at me through the slits in his black mask.

It's queer sometimes how we feel an interest in a strange man knowing in some unaccountable fashion that we also interest him. This man produced such an effect on me instantly and my heart beat faster at the thought that he might be the adventure I was looking for. I nudged Claire, whispering this hope under my breath, as I drank the iced cocktail. The strange Sheik seemed to be devouring me with his invisible eyes. He took a step or two my way, and I moved in his direction as if drawn forward by an irresistible force.

Before we came together a trumpet sounded through the amber dimness of the vast hall. There was an audible stirring of breath, then a silence as if everyone were waiting for something to happen. Suddenly a rich bass voice rumbled through

the room. It seemed as if it were coming from all sides at once:

"The dancers of Destiny are coming. They bring ribbons bearing your lottery number. It is the command of Allah that upon finding her numbered ribbon every lady will follow it wherever it may lead for at the end romance awaits her—." Somehow I felt as if once again I were back in Tunis where I had spent the previous winter, hearing the muezzin, in the name of Allah, calling out from a minaret.

The music struck up again. This time it was a wild desert tune. The beating of the tom toms, and the shrill blasts of the hautboys charged the air with a feeling of abandon and recklessness. The amber tide of light flowed silently out of the hall, leaving us in mystical darkness. There were whispers, and soft shuffling of feet. The strange Sheik had moved toward me. I stood still, hoping he would touch me. Almost in that second, fingers whose touch thrilled me drifted over my bare arms.

A voice that was like liquid mystery in the dark whispered, "Allien."

I drew back startled at my name on the man's lips. He was a stranger to me. I did not recognize his voice. "Who are you?" I asked. My heart was beating like the tom toms.

"NO ONE you have ever seen or known, but some one who feels he has known you all his life in his dreams." There was an intensity in the tones that stirred me.

At that moment the darkness danced with rainbow lights, and two beautifully formed girls, wearing harem face-veils, whirled madly through the play of colored lights, each one pulling a bunch of ribbons from the mysterious spaces that had given them up.

My number was on a ribbon that fluttered through the hall like a flame. I snatched it, conscious that the fascinating Sheik was watching me. Winding it around my hand I moved reluctantly forward, feeling that I was leaving romance and intrigue behind me.

The flame ribbon led me out of the great hall. Vaguely I realized that according to arrangements a man would be at the end of my ribbon, but that no longer seemed a fascinating Destiny unless the man were to be the one behind me. However, I had to play the game. I looked over my shoulder as I went out. My Sheik was not in sight. I supposed he had gone in search of the girl whose number corresponded with his own, and I was jealous.

A moment later I found myself in a small room that had been draped, and fitted up like an Oriental tent. A thin ribbon of blue smoke drifted upward from a green jade urn in one corner, filling the tent with incense. I was about to throw myself upon the bright pillows piled high on the richly rugged floor when there was a soft sound in

the dimly lighted little room. The next moment strong arms lifted me up, and held me in such a close embrace that I could neither see nor make an outcry.

"Allien, I've come for you, although our numbers are not the same. This is a night for Sheiks. They take the girl they want. I'm not going to lose you," whispered a voice that was like liquid mystery.

THE man's arms loosened. I turned my face up to his, and said: "But, there'll be a girl waiting somewhere for you. You can't take me," I said to dare him.

"That makes no difference. If you do not come with me I'll carry you off."

"Where to?" I asked. I was excited by his cave-man threat.

"I'll find a place. Throw somebody else out of their rendezvous," he answered.

To make him carry out his threat to take me off, I began wriggling and squirming in his arms. They closed around me like bands of steel:

"Let me go, let me go! You [Continued on page 106]



In another moment we were standing close together, our masks pulled away. "Allien, do you hear me?" my sheik whispered. "I'm telling you that I love you. Tonight is the beginning of everything." Swept off my feet in that mad moment of romance it made no difference who he was.

A Self-Told Romance of a Girl of the Canadian Wilds



I WAS a dancer in the Wine Star cabaret, where the roughest men of the last Far North frontier gather. The night Wolfclaws Colombes, the bad half-breed savage, gave me a silver fox fur and boasted that I was his girl, a handsome stranger came into the dance-hall. It seemed that he had been sent by Fate to protect me, but he turned from me in disgust because he heard Wolfclaws's boastful lies. I deliberately flirted with the stranger and Wolfclaws became so enraged he attempted to take the man's life. In the fight that followed the stranger knocked Wolfclaws un-

conscious but his own arm was so badly cut I had to take him to the doctor. I saw him start for his lonely cabin, miles away, and then discovered that Wolfclaws had gone out to trail him, threatening to ambush and kill him. It was up to me to warn him. With a borrowed sledge I reached the cabin before either of the men. There I found newspaper clippings which seemed to prove the stranger a murderer, a fugitive from justice. Before I recovered from that shock, I heard a sound at the door and found myself looking into the mouth of a pistol held by Wolfclaws.

HUNTED LOVERS

*Follow Them Into
the Hidden Fastness
of the
White North*

AS WOLFCLAWS COLOMBES, the bad man of our North country, rushed at me through the door of the mystery man's cabin I knew I was trapped. But, I was desperate. Colombes must never see the newspaper clippings that revealed Barret F. Englow's true identity as Alan Wending, a hunted man, wanted for murder in New York.

In spite of Wolfclaws's flourishing revolver, I turned to the table where I had laid the clippings, bent upon seizing and throwing them into the fire, but the half-breed moved with the cruel swiftness of a lean timber wolf, and dragged me back. As he pulled me around to face him, I saw his beady eyes were glowering at the clippings that lay in full view on the table, and I felt that in his uncanny way he grasped that I had tried to destroy them.

My right hand went for my toy-like pistol, but the half-breed's was quicker than mine. He snatched the weapon and sent it spinning through the doorway.

"Bah! So you come here too? Sacre! I know! You come to warn him. Wolfclaws ees to keel him. Eef you were man, I keel you too. But, you Jacqueline for M'sieu Colombes! Let me see what you try keep from me!" With those words he laid his pistol on a chair, grasped both my hands in one of his clawlike ones, and bent over to pick up the printed strips of paper that would betray the young stranger's fatal secret.

His bending, unbalanced body offered me a mad chance to get Wolfclaws's pistol in my hands, and save Englow from death and discovery, and myself from worse than death. I broke loose and leaped at Wolfclaws. The sudden impact of my weight, catching him off balance, hurled him to the floor. I reached frantically for the pistol. But even sprawled out as he was, the half-breed thwarted me. Lunging forward on his hands and knees, he turned on me, blocking my way. He was on his feet in an instant and we went into a wild, unequal clinch, stumbling to the floor.

I tried to free my hands so I could tear at his coat, but he rolled me over. Catching both of





SHOULD I have to sit, helpless, bound to a sledge, and watch Wolfclaws murder an unarmed man—the man I had come so far to save? The thought was agony, but help was closer than I knew. Suddenly a savage growl filled the air! A great ball of brown fur sprang at Wolfclaws.



WOLFCLAWS swerved like a streak to shoot the big dog but for once he was up against something that moved faster than he did. Captain was at the bad man's throat before he could take aim. I saw the rifle flash out of Wolfclaws's hand, thrust back by the dog's attack.

my wrists Colombes held them together with the cruel strength of a steel trap. I kicked frenziedly, screaming with the pain that shot up through my arms.

You got plenty strength! That's good! I like that," he sneered. Putting more pressure on my wrists, he jerked me to my feet. Towering over me, Wolfclaws shoved his ugly face close to mine: "I feex you plenty now for what you do. I teach you to go against Wolfclaws. I tie you, hand and feet. Then I find that young pig and feex him good."

Whipping out a long string of buckskin from a pocket he made my hands fast. As he reached down to bind my ankles I kicked at him viciously. It was as if I had kicked a rock. Except for a snarl, Wolfclaws went on with the work of making me more helpless than ever.

HAD I not known Wolfclaws's evil reputation I might have begged for mercy as he lifted me bodily, and carried me across the room. But the whole North country knew there was no mercy in the man's heart. So I let him fling me down in the corner without an outcry.

Lying there I tried to conquer my fear by remembering that the Voice of the North had promised that the mysterious young stranger would stand between me and harm.

Surely he can't fail me now," I insisted inwardly.

Meantime Wolfclaws stamped over to the table and picked up the clippings. Terror swept over me. We knew at Waskia that Colombes could read sparingly and write in scrawly fashion. Would he be able to deduce the truth about Englow's identity from the clippings? Apparently he knew that the mystery man called himself Englow. Fortunately there was no such name mentioned in the clippings. It was the scar that would identify Englow as Wendring if Wolfclaws knew about it. News spread like wildfire in Waskia. In telling others about stitching the mystery man's arm, Doctor McGarten would surely mention the fork-like scar which had impressed him so much. I could only pray that Colombes knew nothing of it.

As the half-breed knit his heavy brows over the task of reading, I lay there waiting for some tell-tale sign or sound. An ominous silence grew in the cabin. Wolfclaws shattered it, at last, with an exultant curse. The realization that I had betrayed the hunted stranger's secret reason for being in the Canadian woods into his enemy's hands became gall, embittering my blood, as Colombes rushed upon me brandishing the clippings and shouting:

"Sacrist! I onderstan' now. The doctor's tell me about that feller's scar. Voila! Englow's keel a man in New York. He's come here to hide. Bah! the police no nevar get heem. Wolfclaws get heem toot sweet. Come, I tie you to my sledge, and you see me keel him."

STUFFING the clippings in his parka's pocket Colombes picked me up, and bore me outside and strapped me to the sledge. Fearing that I might scream out he muffled my face with a heavy, vile-smelling bandanna handkerchief. Then he took the clippings, stuffed them in a little black leather bag. Pulling the strings tight he went over to a powerful, ugly-jawed husky and tied the bag to the brute's collar. Then he went back into the cabin and came out with a piece of paper. He scrawled something on it, and with a fiendish laugh attached it to the bag, and freed the dog:

"Voila! Sawtooth you go home over trail. Somebody see you wiz bag in Waskia. Somebody look in bag. Voila! They find about this feller . . . I keel him toot de sweet, and tell police I keel him trying to bring him back because he's keel somebody. Ha! Ha!" he gloated.

Good heavens above, was there no limit to the evil working of this fiendish mind. And to think that I was responsible! He was sending the clippings which would betray Englow back to the authorities—back to that consummate man-hunter, Sergeant Greystone of the Royal Mounted.

I watched Colombes lead the big malamute by the collar over fifty feet of his own trail. Stopping in the snow he motioned to Sawtooth that he was to go back over the trail. Then, Wolfclaws turned and started toward me. My heart leaped as the animal trailed his master. Perhaps Sawtooth would refuse to obey! Malamutes had a way of being awfully stubborn at times.

But, if the dog was determined not to retrace his way to Waskia, the half-breed was twice as determined that the

husky should go. Mushers club and beat their dogs into obedience. I tried to shut my eyes to the heart-breaking spectacle of that big husky being brutally clubbed every time he whimpered. How I wished that Sawtooth's savage nature would flame up in him, and send him frothing at the half-breed's throat. But, Colombes was the animal's master, and the dog knew it.

Sawtooth turned tail after a last, unbearable string of blows, and ran reluctantly over the white snow, his nose sniffing the homeward trail as he ran. Colombes stood in his tracks, his arm upraised, waiting for the dog to dare turn back again. At fifty yards Sawtooth pulled up, and looked around hoping dumbly for a sign that would bring him back.

Down went Wolfclaws's arm, and he made some savage sound. The husky's head snapped to the front, and he rushed on as if he had been clubbed again. When the woods swallowed the fleeing dog, Colombes returned, a smile of cruel triumph on his face.

"Bon Dieu!" he cursed, "Men! Women! Dogs! Wolfclaws feex them all." His beady eyes shifted from me to the cabin. He shook his fur-capped head in a pleased way. "That's nize cabin for me and you, tonight. Tomorrow we go to my new place beyond North Indiana. Now I find Englow."

The words made me shudder. I knew what was in his mind. I began to think of death, and wondered how I might seek it before night.

WOLFCLAWS disappeared around the cabin, and shortly reappeared driving my borrowed team. What did this mean?

He got his own dogs going again and we were soon within the shadows of the great brooding woods, striking a new trail. Wolfclaws was circling through the forest, hoping to strike the stranger from a flank, or from behind.

Presently he stopped long enough to tether my team to a spruce so the young stranger would not find them if he should return to the cabin. The cunning wolf-devil was leaving nothing undone to achieve his full revenge.

I can never adequately describe the mental torture of that ride on Wolfclaws's sledge. The fact that I was on the way to witness the ambush of the only man who had ever stirred my heart, and that I was responsible for the ugly doom overshadowing him, became acid, eating into my breast. My own fate did not concern me. I could only think of the man who called himself Englow, and pray that some miracle of the woods would happen to save him from the half-breed.

Suddenly the sledge seemed to be dropping with me. It was diving downhill toward the lake's shore! A great furry shadow crowded closer upon me with the downgrade run.

But, when we want to give ourselves hope, we make ourselves believe what we would like to believe. As the sledge moved on, I persuaded myself that the storm had turned the young stranger back, that he was safe in Waskia.

But the thought had barely passed through my mind when the sledge and team jerked to a sudden stop. Looking upward I saw Wolfclaws's eyes had narrowed to slits under his hood. All the cunning, and the fierceness of the living Wild was written on his face. He seemed like some great forest beast, standing upright, scenting the approach of another. I looked away from him, trembling with the belief that I was really with someone more animal than human. The Indians said he was the half-brother of the wolves.

THE sounds he had caught reached me, at last, through the mouth gag that half-muffled my ears. A team was in the woods to the left, headed our way.

Plop, plop, plop went dog feet in the snow! But, above that, and the swishing of the sledge runners, I heard a voice that made my heart stand still.

"Keep 'em pulling, Captain. We're almost there now," the voice rang out.

A hissing, snake-like sound issued from Colombes as he went to his lead dog, Murdernouth, and gave the animal a silent sign to follow. The dogs strained forward in their traces, and pulled me after that sinister, fur-clad form brandishing a rifle. My throat felt as if it were going to burst from the suppressed desire to scream out a warning.

Wolfclaws Colombes appeared to know just which way to go. Suddenly he stopped, screening dogs and sledge behind a group of cone pine. Raising his [Continued on page 121]

Two of a Kind



Curtis Bilemore Studio L. A.

BOTH queens. Twins? No, not even sisters. The fact that they are dressed alike may be only a subtle indication that they are friendly rivals. Pity the man that has to choose between them! The Lorelei with the mirror is Sally Rand; the Siren with the curls is Frances Lee of Christie Comedies.

Girls Will



As a fisherman
Priscilla Dean's no
Jonah! She caught
this whale before
he even knew he
was hooked. Met-
ropolitan Pictures
Corporation
swears that's not
a fish story.



Babe Clara Bow at the
bat for the Hollywood
Paramounts. Some Babe!
And you ought to see her
make a home run!



We're not so good
on a fairway but
if Mae Murray
would "tee off"
with us we'd sign
up for a "two-
some" any day—
and then "sit it
out."



Bets are even as to
the outcome of this
Metro-Metro
bout. Louise Lor-
rain may be a
sure-fire knockout
but her opponent,
Greta Rue, is no
lightweight. She
packs a naughty
wallop.

Be Boys



Carmel Meyers invents a new Black Bottom step every time she plays tennis. M.-G.-M. backs her to win even if the mixed doubles turn out to be a "love game."



OUR grandmothers used to take it out in wishing they were boys while they sat home and made samplers; our sisters just go to it. Since there isn't anything nowadays that a girl can't share with her brothers you may find it easy to agree with Lady Drummond Hay who tells you on page 68 of this very issue how much more fun it is to be a woman.



Look what Renée Adorée caught. There's only one way to get a kick out of an old shoe, Renée. Take it to a wedding and throw it at the bride and groom.

Pauline Starke goes up in the air to get 'em—bare-handed. No highball gets past her.



What is so rare
as a June day?
Mack Sennett
has this lovely
"June Knight"
who he thinks
ought to inspire
any poet

O. O. MINTYRE'S Best True Story This Month

A Boast from Painted Lips

IT IS considered bromidic to chant that truth is stranger than fiction. Yet as certainly as the pine springs to the sun it is.

All of which is to accentuate the veracity of this narrative salvaged out of the long ago with a modern dénouement.

It was in the era of those roystering beer concert halls in the "Over the Rhine" days of Cincinnati. They were sawdust coated places dotted with bare tables, moist and ringed from many glasses.

For the price of a five cent beer one sat and watched the tawdry performers on a miniature stage and in their cheap flashy way they were interesting. There was the green wigged comedian with baggy pants in "songs and funny sayings."

There was Prof. Le Vere and his feats on the magic barrel and Lottie Bensley "in serio-comic songs with slides." And there were also the scantily dressed girls, usually rougishly rouged and buoyantly bunned, who sang the choruses and then ambled out into the hall to mingle with men at the tables.

It is of one of these girls I write. One night she sat down uninvited at a table where a friend and I were seated.

"Gawd, what a life!" she said, somehow sensing our slight revulsion to tarnished youth.

Under the stimulation of several drinks she told the usual story that pours from such painted lips the world over.

She was born on one of those river shanty boats up the Ohio. Her father was a worthless fisherman and both he and her mother were drunkards.

At the age of twelve she had run away with a river show-boat troupe. There had been the usual betrayal and she had been eventually snagged on the outer rim of cheap theatricals as a beer hall chorus girl. She had a pretty name. I will not reveal it but it was something like Lucy Manners. I always remembered it as I always remembered her talk.

"It's a tough break for a girl," she said. "I seem to be sliding to hell on a roly coaster. Just last week a doctor told me I'd better get out of this atmosphere of stale beer and smoke and go west. He said I was getting all burned out."

"But I'm not all bluffed. One of these days I'll meet the right gink and pop out of here. They get pearls from sick oysters and some day I'll show some good man what a real wife is. It has been done before and it can be done again."

It was the usual maudlin talk of the over-stimulated beer hall habitué and we paid our waiter and abruptly departed.

THE other day in the newspapers there was a cabled dispatch from a reliable news agency to American newspapers. For obvious reasons all names have been changed save that of Lucy Manners, which is a pseudonym. Otherwise the dispatch read exactly as follows:

Paris, France—Announcement of the engagement of Miss



Florette Duvall to the Marquis de Charveaux, a descendant of one of the oldest families in France, has been made. Miss Duvall is the daughter of Pierre Duvall, a wealthy manufacturer of Sevre. Miss Duvall's mother was the former American actress, Lucy Manners, whose sensational overnight success in Paris twenty years ago was followed two days later by her marriage to the rich Frenchman. Miss Manners's stage career is said to have begun on an Ohio river show-boat.

You Can't Divorce Love

*The Ordeal of a Man
Who Tried to Forget*

IS THERE an intangible bond between a man and a woman who have been married, have lived together as man and wife, which cannot be broken, even though the two have sought happiness elsewhere?

I suppose a great many people will smile at that question, now that divorce is almost as common as marriage. And yet, there is such a bond. I know.

I smiled, myself, when my wife and I decided to part, to go our separate ways without blame or ill-feeling. We thought, or at least I did, that we could wish each other god-speed like two old friends, who had travelled life's road together for a while, and then reached a crossing. We were even modern enough to have dinner together, to say good-by. Lots of people have done the same, I suppose. Whether they have felt as I felt, I do not know, but I am very sure that none of them have ever had such an experience as came to me.

I went away from dinner with my wife that night, feeling as though life were about to begin all over again for me. We had broken things up, gotten rid of our apartment, our furniture, freed ourselves from all the material shackles that tie people down. I had a sensation of freedom, of being my own master, that I had not known for years. I went to my club, I remember, and drank a good deal. More than was good for me, I'm afraid. In the morning I felt badly, for a while, but things are made very easy for a man, at clubs. I had my breakfast in bed. It was a good breakfast, better than I usually had at home. And I was not forced to listen to any reproaches for having sat up too late and drank too much. Marriage is a mistake, I said.

I CONTINUED to feel that way for several months, but after a while the club began to bore me. Living in one room with nothing about me that I could call my own, the same old faces day after day, at the pool tables, in the card room, the grill. Men who seemed to have no very deep interest in life. Cynics, who made fun of real emotion. "I don't want to get like that," I said to myself. "I've got to have some sort of a home." So I took what furniture I had out of storage and moved to an apartment hotel.

I liked it a lot better, at first. My parlor, bedroom and bath seemed almost palatial, after the cramped quarters at the club. And I had my own things about me—pictures, books, bits of furniture that had come to me from my mother. I'd sit at home and read, night after night, and imagine that I was happy. When I got tired of that, I'd go out, to the theater or the club. Life wasn't so bad. My business took up a lot of energy and thought. But sometimes I'd be pretty lonely in a way that musical shows, poker games and the like didn't help. Lonely, of course, for someone who cared.

A lot of men can find that sort of thing with girls they wouldn't marry. Or they think they can. Women to make a fuss over them or pretend to, at least. I can't. Affection, put on for the occasion like a pleasant smile, never made any hit with me. Affection you buy and pay for! Maybe I'm too hard-boiled. I don't know. But whatever it was my existence lacked, I couldn't find it that way.

Is The Bond Unbreakable Between Man and Wife?

"AFTER we were divorced, I thought I could tell my wife good-by and go away and forget her.

"Lots of people have done the same thing, I suppose," writes the man who tells his story here.

Have they? That is what SMART SET would like to know.

Is this man's experience following his separation from his wife unusual? Was he more emotional, more sensitive than the average husband?

Or was he one who could love but once and one only?

Was he held merely by habit? Or is there a subtle, unbreakable bond between husband and wife that neither time nor distance can sever?

Write SMART SET what your experience has been following divorce.

She asked me to call, and I did. At the end of six months she had promised to marry me. I think she loved me, I was sure that I loved her. The day of our wedding was set.

And then something happened so startling in its effects that even now I can scarcely believe it was true.

I had left my hotel one afternoon about half-past four, to take my car around to the garage. I had been using it all day, making business calls in the suburbs, and wanted to get rid of it because a nasty, drizzling fog had come up. I had an engagement with Rita that evening but I decided it would be simpler to use a taxicab.



WHEN my wife and I decided to part, to go our separate ways without blame or ill-feeling, we thought, or at least I did, that we could wish each other god-speed like two old friends, who had travelled life's road together for a while and then reached a crossing. We were even modern enough to have dinner together to say good-by.

It may be that I was driving a little too fast for such weather. The streets were pretty slippery from the rain, but I was in a hurry, and there was very little traffic and practically no one about. I'd gone perhaps three blocks, and turned into the side street leading to the garage, when suddenly I saw a woman start to cross right in front of me. She didn't see me, I suppose, on account of the fog.

I jammed on the brakes once, tried to turn, but it was too late. My car was a fairly heavy one but it skidded on the greasy pavement and the woman went down under it. I heard the thud of her body as it hit the ground.

Horrified, I got out and ran back to her. She lay on her side, with her arms stretched out, a smear of mud across her face. I took my handkerchief and wiped it off. Then I saw who she was.

The shock of that moment was so terrible that I groaned aloud. I took the woman in my arms and laid her in my car. She wasn't dead; I could see her breast rise and fall as she breathed. In ten minutes I was at the hospital.

They rushed her to the accident ward, of course, while I demanded to see the resident physician. When he came, I grabbed his arm.

"Doctor!" I cried, scarcely knowing what I was saying. "I've brought a woman here! She's hurt! Badly hurt! I want her to have every attention! The best! Money is no object!"

He looked at me curiously for a moment. I did not realize, then, that my collar and cuffs, my coat front, were covered with dirt and blood, that I had lost my hat, that my hair was standing on end.

"Your wife?" he asked me.

"No!" I said. "What difference does it make. She's hurt. I want the best surgeon in town."

He told me, then, that Dr. H—— was in the building. He was one of the best men in his profession, as I very well knew. He was sent for at once.

Shaking like a leaf, I watched him make the examination. The woman's skull was fractured. When he straightened up, he said it would be necessary to operate at once.

"Will she live?" I asked, but I knew then it was a stupid question.

"While there's life, there's hope," he said, and told me to go down to the reception room and wait. He would come to me there as soon as the operation was over. That was all I could get out of him, so I knew matters must be pretty serious.

I went down to the reception room, as he advised me, but I couldn't stand it there. Half a dozen people were sitting about, pale and silent, most of them. There was terror in their eyes, as I knew there must be in mine. Hospitals are dreadful places, especially for those who can only sit and wait. I went out into the street and tried to smoke.

The mist had turned to rain, by that time, but I paid no attention to it. I just walked up and down, up and down. I seemed unable to think. All I could see was that woman's

white face, streaked with mud. It was horrible, sickening. Her face. The woman who had been my wife!

I don't like to think of the agony I went through. The woman I had loved, lived with for years, up in that operating room—dying, maybe—through me! And the woman I had promised to marry waiting for me, to come and take her to the theater that evening. I knew I ought to telephone her and make some excuse, but I couldn't do it.

What was there to say? That my former wife was ill, dying perhaps, and needed me? A man can't tell the woman he's going to marry a thing



like that. She wouldn't understand it. She would say that my ex-wife and I were strangers now, or ought to be, that I'd done all I could do for her, and that my place was with the woman I loved. How could Rita know that ever since I took that limp, unconscious figure in my arms, I'd been thinking of my former wife, wanting to be with her, to comfort, to help her. I hadn't been thinking of Rita. She scarcely seemed to matter at all.

It was there, that intangible bond I have spoken of, holding this woman and myself together, tugging at my heart. I had supposed that all ties between us were broken long ago. Now I knew they weren't. The courts had said so, but all the courts can do is to sever legal ties. Other kinds, born of two people having loved, no courts can touch. I'd never thought the thing out, before. I wouldn't have, then, except for the terrible situation in which I was placed. For half an hour, maybe longer—I'd lost all track of time—I walked up and down in the rain, thinking, thinking, only to come back,

every time, to the one conclusion, that what happened to the woman upstairs was more important to me, then, than anything in the world. Anything. Or anybody.

Presently it occurred to me that the doctor might finish the operation, come down stairs to see me and find me gone, so I threw away my half-smoked cigar and hurried back to the reception room. People were still there, waiting. I don't believe one of them had moved. I sat in a chair and held on to its arms as though to keep from jumping up and going to the elevator. Every moment I kept thinking, "Is she alive yet? Is she alive yet?" I told myself she was. The thought of going through life, knowing that I had killed her was too terrible to be borne.

A nurse came to the door and beckoned to me. Dr. H—— she said, would see me now, in the resident's office. I went in. He was alone. His face told me nothing.

"Well?" I questioned.

"She stood the operation very well," he said.

"Her chances of recovery are excellent. I'm speaking of the fracture, of course. From certain indications, I fear she has sustained some injury to the spine. Too soon to tell, definitely, now. But I feel fairly safe in telling you that she will live."

"Thank God!" I whispered. Then, because the strain had been so great I broke down and began to cry.

The doctor looked at me curiously. He was wondering, I suppose, what the woman could be to me. They had told him she wasn't my wife.

"If you will let us have the patient's name," he said kindly.

I gave it to him. Her maiden name. She'd taken that, after the divorce. I couldn't give him her address, however, because I didn't know it. Later, I found out that she had been living for some months in a small apartment not far from mine. That was why she happened to be walking where she was, when I ran her down.

I knew the doctor thought it queer that I couldn't give him the address. Here I was,

showing plainly enough that the woman's injuries, her life or death, meant everything to me, and yet, I did not know her address. If she had been my wife, my sister or my fiancée, he would have understood, but as it was, he didn't, and showed it.

"Doctor," I said, "something terrible

has happened to me, something unbelievable. If I could tell you about it—"

He must have thought me a little mad. Perhaps I acted like it. He looked at his watch.

"I can give you ten minutes," he said.

I thanked him and began to tell him my story. How I'd been married, divorced. I

wanted him to understand, perhaps to advise me, what to do. I suppose I rambled a bit, in my excitement, about how splendid a woman my wife was, how the first break between us had been my fault—a quarrel over a silly girl, a stenographer, I'd been running around with. Nothing serious, really, but tattle-tales, gossips, malicious old women, and men, had made my wife think so. They had worked on her pride, her vanity, her self-respect and made her believe I had humiliated her in the eyes of the world. How, a year later, we had come to the parting of the ways, been divorced, with no great bitterness on either side.

Then I told him about Rita, what a fine girl she was, how we had planned to be married in a few days. He sat there listening politely enough, but I suppose he realized that I was pretty badly upset, and he had better humor me.

When I came to the part about the accident and described how my car had skidded, how the woman had been struck, I broke down again, and couldn't go on. I saw the doctor glance at the card on which he had just written the patient's name. Then he put his hand on my shoulder.

"And this woman, Miss V——, is your fiancée," he said. "The girl you are about to marry. Terrible. Terrible. No wonder you feel as you do."

[Continued on page 104]



"Maybe I am jealous of your first wife," Rita said. "I'm sorry she's ill but why push me aside for someone who went out of your life before you met me?" She pulled off the engagement ring I had given her. "Here," she said. "I guess she needs you more than I do."

I Thought

MEN

Liked Their

Women

WILD



*Knowing Jim was there I pranced through the songs as
I never had before. The star had backed out at the last
minute and I took her place, so I had a better chance
than ever to high-kick, with the girls following me*

THIS is the story of a girl who was no good on earth. I was that girl. And I was saved by the only thing that ever did save a girl—love! It was my love for a man that saved me. It isn't being loved that saves a woman. It's her own capacity for loving. And I loved a man, loved him so that a great redeeming force swept over my life! Have you ever loved a man that way? And the right man?

I didn't begin very well for at only sixteen—long before I knew anything at all—I was in the chorus. I, Peggy Lane, a big splendid overgrown girl, with a strong young body, was dancing in the front row and bringing down the house. I wasn't the fragile type. I was healthy; and I loved the sun and the wind and the rain and the sweet fresh air. And I took all that vitality with me to the footlights.

Yet the girls liked me. I knew every line of our musical comedy and I could fill in anywhere. One night something happened in our last act. The star had been feeling groggy

all the evening; and in the last verse she collapsed. I heard the director say sharply: "Peggy, jump in." And, like a flash, I sprang out of the ranks, caught the star just as she was going down and sang her lines:

"And all the clouds have silver linings, when you know that someone cares."

THEN I stepped back and left her bowing, unsteady on her legs but able to take her curtain call, while I marched off with the rest of the chorus. My, but she thanked me! I was just a great big doll-baby, no more conscious of my own beauty, nor of life, than a big wax doll.

The best thing about being in the chorus was the crowd, the boys. They met us after the show and took us out. It was a case of private dining room, drinks, and all the rest. I never went the limit like some of the girls, but I did not try to stop them.



The Girl I Might Have Been

But I did play with fire. I led a fellow on. And, when he had taken me some place, and started to get fresh, I threw him down. I did this time and again. It wasn't sportsmanship, but it was fun! Of course the same fellow never took me twice, but I was the handsomest, liveliest girl in the front row, and there was always another fellow crazy about me. My what a sporty crowd we had! Duke and Tex and Strike and a dozen others! The manager catered to them because it kept the show going.

NIGHTS after the show we all met in Merino's and danced. As if we hadn't danced enough! And, then, we paired off. I usually drew a cub who had fallen for my shape at the show. I would go to supper with him somewhere, then laugh at him and run along home and go to bed in my little hall room. For the chorus doesn't pay for maisonettes in Park Avenue apartment houses. Don't be fooled about that!

One night a new man joined our crowd at Merino's. His name was James Worthing. The fellows called him Jim. He was in perfect evening dress and his manner was a shade more reserved than the others. He did not display his bank-roll and he stood apart, watching us, as though not sure he wanted to know us. Then Susette, the girl who kicked next to me in the chorus, introduced us. She did it briefly: "Jim, meet Peggy Lane!" Then off she whirled. I stuck out my highly tinted pink finger tips and felt them clasped in a big warm hand. I lifted my head and looked into Jim Worthing's face, caught the glint of his red hair, and I saw something I had never seen before! I saw the only man who had ever been worth a second glance of my practiced eyes.

In our set we do not delay. I knew that I wanted Jim to date me up for that very night and drive me out somewhere to supper. And I wouldn't care how late we stayed. I helped it along in the only way I had ever known. I smiled my big

baby-blue-eyes smile and said: "I'm yours tonight, Jim! Call a taxi!" And I did it in a bold, fresh way that always hit. I was so handsome I could get away with anything.

But Jim was engaged; Susette had him. As she was getting into her real ermine coat. I called her down for it. She was genuinely sorry: "How did I know he was going to be the apple of your eye—so soon! Shake out of it, Peggy!"

AND, then, Strike came along. I was sore about Jim; and I clutched at Strike. "Take me out, Strike. I'm a widder lady to-night!" I had never been out with Strike. I was afraid of him. But, now! Well, he was a fellow! And I felt lonesome for the first time.

Strike was eager: "Sure, I'll take you, Peggy! Get on your bonnet. I'll take you to the sportiest place in New York."

I hurried into my rusty blue velvet cape, trimmed with gilt braid. It was too small for me.



"Aren't you in love with me a little bit, Jim?" I asked. He did not answer, but I understood. He was ashamed of me. "Could you have loved me if I hadn't been wild?" I asked. "I'd never have left you," he said, "if you had been a lady."

My clothes were never big enough. They were always cheap, showy, second-hands, sold at a bargain by some girl who had struck luck.

We got in a taxi and Strike behaved fairly well, considering the hard reputation he had with the girls, but he smelt of oil, where the hair was slicked over the bald spot on his head, and his necktie was awful.

We had a private room at the club for supper and when we had finished Strike said: "Now girlie! Come across!" He made a dive for me. I jumped and he chased me round and round the table. I flung it over, dishes and all. He grabbed me and I fought him, pitted my splendid strength against his; and he was as a reed in my hands. I could have bent him. He let me go and I flung open the door. Then, Strike showed his true sportsmanship. He straightened his roughened clothes and walked beside me, through that big, lighted dining-room, holding my arm, as if I had been his dearest baby-doll.

And, there, in the light of the big room sat Jim and Susette! They saw us. Susette waved her hand gaily, but Jim did not even nod.

Two nights later Jim joined the crowd again. It is a gay infectious habit, the crowd, and you don't even want to break away. I tried again to get Jim, and this time I succeeded. He sat down with me at one of the tables, and I certainly talked. I told him about Strike and Tex and Mug, how they all liked me, how I had been around with them all. I let him think I was wild.

YOU see I was only a poor little girl, anxious to win Jim. And I took the only way I knew about. I had seen the girls work it with other fellows, but Jim only listened. Not that he wasn't agreeable, but I didn't make the headway with him I wanted. I wanted him to love me! I had seen the other girls get married. Jim was the only man I had ever really liked, and I wanted him to marry me. I knew the method. It was a case of out one night—a little flat—and "Girls! I'm married!" But the night out and the flat came first! I must try the sure method.

I got out my vanity case and tilted the mirror. My lip-stick came out. Then a dab of powder on my nose.

"You're pretty enough, Peggy, without those things," said Jim.

"You really think I'm pretty, Jim?" It was the first time I had actually cared.

Jim leaned across the table. "You're not merely pretty, Peggy. You're a beauty, a marvelous beauty! You'd take a prize in any beauty contest."

I waited for him to go on but he was silent; "Why don't you date me up, Jim?"

"After Tex and Mug and Strike?"

I was so innocent that I really thought he was jealous; and I said: "I don't care for them Jim. I'll drop them all, for just you."

But he shook his head: "Can't do it, Peggy! You're too common."

And I did not know what he meant. I still thought he was jealous. I went home that night and looked over my wardrobe and resolved that I would win Jim, anyway. The star's gowns were almost big enough for me, and they were

gorgeous. I bought a bright scarlet chiffon, not much the worse for wear.

When Jim next saw me at the midnight restaurant, I was decked out, and I danced in front of him like a wind of flame. Strike was my partner, but Jim had to dance with me and I resolved that, if I ever got him on the floor, I would give him one dance he wouldn't forget. But, when I felt Jim's strong arms around me, all my wild spirit fled. I drew a long breath and resigned myself to his arms. We danced together as if we had danced so all our lives. I felt like a happy angel dancing into Paradise.

At the close of the dance Jim said simply: "Thank you Peggy!"

I couldn't let him go that way: "Aren't you going to take me home, Jim?"

"Certainly!" He called a taxi. We sat side by side but he didn't even put his arm around me so I asked: "Don't you ever pet, Jim?"

"Oh yes!" he replied promptly.

"Then pet me, Jim."

But he didn't. At my lodging he helped me out; opened the front door with my key; bowed "Good night!" and was gone. I did some crying in my pillow that night.

A lady in Jim's high-toned set was giving a big fête down on Long Island. She engaged the entire Chorus to come down. When we arrived there we found a big shaky platform erected at one end of the ballroom. It was ten feet from the floor and on this we were to do our dance. There were twenty of us and I was as usual in the front row. The star had backed out at the last minute and I was told to jump into her place. The ballroom was crowded, ladies and gentlemen, glistening with jewels, white shirt fronts. A splendid affair with New York's smartest set there. And Jim was well front, almost under the stage. He looked dark, splendid.

Lord, how I danced! I pranced through the songs and shouted, the girls following my lead. I stood on one foot and flung my slipper. When a man tossed it back I caught it on my toe; and danced headily!

I was leading our grand march which we did in single file, hands on each other's shoulders, when I felt the floor slipping. The girls felt it, too. I heard it in their high frightened note. The stage was giving way. There was a shelf of palms near the exit. Quick as a flash I planted one foot upon that ledge and grabbed the girl next to me. It was Susette. I took her by the shoulders and lowered her to the floor. She landed lightly on her toes. One after another, as the scared girls pressed close I lowered them. The audience thought it was all part of our act and applauded wildly. But Jim, standing below, saw what was really happening. As I lowered the last girl the stage fell. I went down with it but Jim broke my fall.

When the guests saw it was not in the act they crowded

around me, but when I said that I was not hurt, they drifted away.

I felt faint and Jim took me out in the grounds. He led me off to a little summer house and brought me a drink. I took it from his hands, trembling. He gave me the warmest look he had ever bestowed upon me: "That was a splendid exhibition of strength, Peggy, and unselfishness! You risked your life."

He was beside me on the seat, holding the glass. I swallowed the water obediently like a child. I cast my eyes down. And, again, that strange feeling came over me, that feeling of awe for Jim. I had intended if I got him out in the garden to win him, but now that I was there, alongside him, alone, I felt afraid.

"Aren't you in love with me a little bit, Jim?" I would have leaned my head on his shoulder, except for that new feeling of awe!

Jim looked down at me, so close to him on that bench, in the vine-draped arbor with the scented air enclosing us:

"Yes, I'm a little bit in love with you, Peggy, with the girl you might have been."

The girl I might have been! "What do you mean, Jim? Could you have loved me if I was the girl I might have been?"

"Yes, Peggy! So help me God! I could have loved you."

Then Jim stood up in front of me. I thought he was going and I put out my hand and clutched his coat, but he did not

notice. Then he said: "I'm not lecturing you, Peggy. I couldn't consistently do that. I'm talking to you as sinner to sinner! You're going the pace and the life will get you, if it hasn't got you already. Good God, Peggy! I'm afraid of you."

"Afraid of me! Why are you afraid of me, Jim?"

Jim laughed: "Don't play innocent with me, Peggy, after all you've told me. You are the prettiest girl I ever saw and the most generous! Didn't I see you jump in and help the star that night she fainted? I was in the audience and saw it all. Didn't I see you save the girls to-night? And you so bad! It doesn't seem possible, Peggy!"

I wanted to cry out that it wasn't true, all I'd told him, about Tex and Mug and Strike; that I just loved him.

I PUT my arms on the back of the wooden bench and buried my head. "Oh, Jim, can't you ever love me?"

He lifted my face in both his hands and held it to the light: "I'm in love with the girl you might have been! I'm afraid it's too late for anything else, now, Peggy. I saw you and Strike come out of that room together that night. Oh, if you could have seen yourself, Peggy, and you so pretty! The pity of it!" He turned away as if he could not bear the sight of my face.

I caught him. "Look at me, Jim. I am the girl I might have been. There never was anything [Continued on page 124]

The Problem of a Girl With a Sorely Troubled Soul



Underwood & Underwood

Has SHE the Right to Motherhood?

By Alice C. Smith

Probation Officer

Woman's Day Court, New York

I DO not know if I am a bad girl," began my visitor. Then noting the surprise which must have shown on my face she hurried on, "The world might think so, but I cannot believe it!"

She was young, expensively though modestly dressed, and cultured, unmistakably a lady by birth and breeding. She was pretty, too, though there were deep shadows under her troubled blue eyes.

"You see," she went on, halting from embarrassment, "the man I loved died, before we could marry."

Then, as comprehension began to dawn on me she hurried on, a pleading ring in her voice. "Please don't judge me too quickly! I need your help!"

To be Probation Officer in The Woman's Day Court in New York City is to participate actively in a soul clinic where the

hearts of erring women, buffeted by sin, come under the pitiless scalpel of exposure. Here are brought for man's judgment, not only the pitiful Sisterhood of the Streets, hardened, hopeless and contemptuous, but also the foolish novice, taking her first oblique steps and still but lightly touched by vice.

Here, too, come the unfortunate girls whose sin has quickly found them out.

To be placed in virtual control of these errant girls by the Court, charged to win their confidence, to guide them and watch them and help them over the rough spots, until they win back to self respect and self confidence or are given up as hopeless, is a sad duty but one not without compensations. Out of the confidences of these struggling souls one gets a new understanding of the so-called Social Sin, an understand-

ing of its many degrees and changing aspects, an appreciation also of the varied pitfalls and temptations which beset girls of differing mould and different moral resistance. And one who keeps open eyes and mind will come to realize that "frailty" is more often a result of weakness than of vicious intent.

Saddest figures of all in the dreary assemblage are the young girls about to become unwed mothers. And next to them in sorrow are their parents. The hardest task of a probation officer, I think, is to tell an unsuspecting mother or father that their daughter, their little girl, is branded by the shame that has carried odium to women since the beginning of time. Sometimes the knowledge of a girl's misfortune develops incidentally in a court proceeding, often to the surprise of the victim herself. Sometimes the parents or friends of a girl come in search of advice, and occasionally a harried girl will, of her own volition, come seeking guidance or vengeance on her betrayer. But never before had one come like this cultured girl who was not seeking material help, but only light that she might find her own way out of the wilderness.

USUALLY the girl in such a plight is inarticulate, muted by shame, or bravado, or inability of expression. But this girl was different! Not different in her mental reactions, but different because she was both able and eager to voice the turmoil that racked her soul.

She had scarcely begun her explanation when it became clear that in voicing the old, old story of a woman's shame she was striking a new note, or at least a note that the near-sighted world seems always to have overlooked. This was a modern girl with a modern viewpoint, a girl whose sensibilities had been heightened by culture, environment, imagination. She was facing the ancient problem not in the ancient way of submission, but after the way of the girl of today who reasons out things for herself.

Listening closely, I came to realize that she was voicing the sorrows of the Pitiful Sisterhood, her story the composite of a million others, a human document baring the conscience of frail womanhood. And because it opens a new vista I have set down the story as the girl told it to me. If the words seem disjointed and hysterical at times, remember they are hers and that, it seems to me, they help to disclose more vividly than any of mine could the conscience of a modern, intelligent woman harassed by the old problem. She began:

"I want you to understand that my anxiety is not about myself. The penalties I may have to pay do not concern me in the least. Something deeper tortures me. There are terrible problems that no one but an unmarried girl who faces maternity could even imagine.

"Again and again I

rebel. I ask myself if a just and merciful God could so torture a helpless woman! Then I know it is not He! Nothing out of the hand of the Shepherd could be both good and bad at the same time, a vision of heaven and a taste of hell!

"Day and night, sleeping and waking, I am forever threshing my problem over and over in my mind. Doubts assail me, terrible uncertainties! I am groping in every direction and get nowhere. Even my dreams—nightmares always—are full of contradictions. Grim figures mock and menace me, suggesting suicide, terrible iniquities, murder—if it is murder, as I have been taught, for a woman to avert maternity.

ONLY a woman who has felt the touch of an awakening life can possibly understand how much I want my babe I stand in dread of what I face but all the while a sort of glory suffuses me. Already, shadowy hands are at my breast in the dark my ears strain suddenly to faint imagined cries. Moist, fragrant baby lips are pressing against mine in my day



THIS gloomy looking building, Jefferson Market Court, in New York City, is something more than a judgment seat where punishment is meted out. It is a soul clinic—a place where girls like this one bring their heartaches for healing, a place where their mistakes are understood and corrected, a place where mercy tempers justice. Its influence is far reaching, touching as it often does, through mothers who offer them no legal passport, the lives of children yet to come.

dreaming! How can I give it up! All the joy I had in my dead lover, all our deathless faith and hope, all that was sublime in our love is crystallized in this divine miracle—in my 'shame,' as the world will call it.

"BUT even though I am thinking of my babe's father with a love that is deathless, I know that this sublime feeling within me is not because I sense his reincarnation. It is more than that. It is the touch of the strongest force in the universe, the mother instinct. Where would the world be without the call of maternity? Blame it for our frailties! But for its resistless urge would any woman be a mother?

"Now I know the real penalty that every unwed mother must pay. It is not the physical torture, not the odium that awaits her. It is that she must choose between her two strongest instincts, instincts that in sanctioned motherhood go hand in hand, while in my plight one instinct is pitted against the other. Either she must betray her urge for motherhood or she must be false to that other divine instinct, the protective instinct, miracle of motherhood, the most sublime fact in sentient life. For unless she puts aside her yearning for her babe, sacrificing it to the conventions, why then she betrays her child to a life of trouble that nothing will ever enable it to surmount.

"I want my baby and I would have it at any cost to myself! But do my aching desires transcend the rights of the babe? What shall I do? I am frantic! Doubts—doubts—nothing but doubts! One moment I see the right path stretching straight before me, the next moment I am immured in the quicksands of uncertainty. I have talked with others, about a mythical girl in trouble. I have read. I have sifted out exactly what I know my parents and my friends would think, and out of it comes chaos. One viewpoint counsels one course, another viewpoint something entirely different. I get nowhere, and my time is short—I mean the time left for me to pick and choose.

"I HAVE no shame in the start of my trouble. Perhaps I am wrong. I know that we loved with a divine fire that made everything seem right between us. Ours was a passion that transcended self. And when the truth dawned upon us we exulted. That was the sort of love we felt.

"I remember how we used to go through stores, hand in hand, eyes clinging, inspecting tiny garments. He wanted his gift to be the first thing our babe should wear. Pink or blue? That was our biggest problem. He, my man, declared it would be a boy. And so a boy it is in my every thought. I wore a wedding ring, the ring that was to be the symbol of our union. How the salesgirls used to smile at me with women's understanding and congratulations.

"Then one day in a subway train I saw a newspaper extra recounting the fall of an elevator in an office building. My boy's name flashed before me, first in the list of the victims! I was told an old negro woman brought me home. I thank God that the blow was heavy enough to dull my senses.

"Mine was a dull, slow awakening to the agony of realization like the recovery of a surgical patient from the anesthetic. It gave me a chance to gain control of myself, to hold my secret. God, how I wanted to shriek it out at first!

"Then gradually a new feeling came to me as I remembered more clearly the babe to come. This secret of mine was God-

given, easing the pang of my lover's loss. For a day that feeling lasted. Between each paroxysm of grieving for my sweetheart came the balm of maternal prospect.

"But presently doubts began to creep in—ugly, torturing doubts. I was assailed by a realization of my true plight. There is a limit to human endurance. My mind suddenly gave way to brain fever. They tell me I babbled foolish things about babies, but they blame it on the disorder of my fevered brain.

"THAT is what they still think. They think each sob wrung from the depths of my heart is for my lover, when chiefly it is for my babe-to-be. When the ordeal of doubt through which I am passing shows itself in occasional outbursts they think it is due to self pity for my loss. The loss of my lover is swallowed up in this greater problem that, after all, is as much his as mine! That is what I tell myself when sometimes my heart accuses me of disloyalty in putting our babe first. It seems sometimes almost as though he were by my side trying to comfort me. The air tingles with his presence as though he were straining against shackles. I cry, 'Oh, my love why cannot you reach by the barrier and guide me! In a love like ours and a plight like ours, surely God would not stand in the way! Pray to the Holy Mother to intercede, as I am always praying. She is a mother—understanding! This innocent babe is as much a part of you as of me and but for His will it could not be!'

"So it went for weeks, this relentless seeking, so it still goes, leaving me baffled at every turn. And if at times my reasoning seems hysterical, remember I am still frantic from floundering in the wilderness.

"It is a mercy for mankind that sorrow does not need to show its real cause. Yesterday, I heard my father whisper to my mother that at last I was becoming reconciled.

"Reconciled—think of that! Why it is only beginning. Each day the torture becomes less bearable. If I do not soon find some answer I do not know what I shall do. Strange to say the thought of self destruction never enters my mind. No doubt the shadowy hand of the babe takes care of that. It is that hand, perhaps, that stays many an unfortunate girl who under lesser trouble would end it all.

"SOMETIMES I wonder if I am specially tuned to suffering. Surely, not every girl in my trouble goes through the torment that constantly afflicts me. Perhaps my education has something to do with it, or my imagination. I used to pride myself on these.

Better far that I had been a dull clod with a vision that did not reach beyond the material. That is the price we pay for culture, an increased capacity for suffering. I could not have inherited my temperament from my parents. Though my mother is emotional her troubles never bite below the surface. My father is too cold, too practical, too submissive to the afflictions of mankind ever to have planted the seed of the rebellion that tosses me ceaselessly.

"It seems grimly funny to me—the kindness he is showing—a tenderness that I never suspected he possessed. But, oh, if he knew the cause of my sorrow how different it would be! My mother is his opposite, ready with sympathy for everybody. She does her best to console me with a certain argument, not knowing that each [Continued on page 102]

*He Was Too Lazy to Love and Too
Lazy to Work—So It Was Up to
Me to Make a Great Pitcher of*

My Bush League

Lover



I have seen speed; watched pitchers so fast that, as the players said, "there was smoke on the ball when it went past" but never have I seen as much speed as George Blaine unleashed then.

FOR me the year began some time about the middle of February and ended along towards the last week in March. The rest of the months were waste.

From the middle of February until, at latest, the first of April, the little Texas town of Lissom Springs, where I lived, throbbed with life and excitement. During that time the thirty-odd baseball players, the dozen newspaper correspondents, and the attachés of the New York Trojans baseball club woke our tiny town from its lassitude, and filled its streets with laughing, engaging life.

I knew the veteran baseball players and the veteran baseball writers from one season to another, because my father, Don Payne, owned the only hotel in the town. Since most of its prosperity depended on the baseball club's patronage, despite the health-giving value of its springs, I helped out in the rushed training period by acting as cashier in the dining room.

Although I was only twenty-two, in the six years I had been helping my father I had seen many a change, and had become familiar with the ways of big league baseball players.

They came, shy, fearing to meet the world. Some of them lasted through the training period and then went into the largeness of New York.

They returned with two and three gorgeous wardrobe trunks. They owned cars; expensive,

uttering cars. They spoke of this and that great favorite of the stage as their familiars. They knew movie heroes and heroines.

The real veterans, the men who were maybe thirty years old and were at the very top of their fame, were nearly always nice and considerate.

Big Fred Wayne, the greatest pitcher in the world, they said, always remembered me. Every year when he came down to Lissom Springs, he would slouch over to my cage in that soft friendly way of his, and hand me a package, saying huskily,

"Now don't let my missus know I brought you this. She'd scratch my eyes out if she knew." And then we would laugh, for I knew that the big, good-hearted man never had a secret from his adored wife in his life.

And a little later Dolly Wayne would stop for a chat with me, and ask me how I liked the dress, or the lin-

gerie, or whatever it was her husband had brought me. And she'd tell me how she had shopped around New York for it, until she found just the exact shade, because Fred was so particular to get the right thing for me.

"He says you're his mascot," she'd always tell me. "I'm a little jealous of the way you cheered him up when he was in the dumps his first year here. Fred never will forget how you helped him."

He says that but for your perking up his spirits he would have gone home, and given up. So I'm your debtor, too, because if he hadn't come to New York, I might never have met him."

It was nice of Fred to think of me that way, because his first season as a rookie with the New York Trojans was my first year helping father.

"We started our careers the same time," the big pitcher would say.

HE HAD been a big, shy boy from some backwoods town, a town even smaller than Lissom Springs, if that was possible, and he used to be so discouraged because the veteran players against whom he pitched always seemed to know just what he was going to pitch. Old Bill Mullins, the manager, said he had a habit of tipping his delivery, and it was very difficult for him to learn to throw everything with exactly the same motion.

I used to go for walks with him at night, and tell him what Dad had told me about the difficulties other famous stars had. There were others, too, I helped that way. It became sort

of a habit for me to pick out the shyest of the rookies each year, and try to help him gain that confidence in himself which he needed to make good in major league baseball.

"Mother Miriam," some of the players called me, although I was younger than nearly every one of them.

I took pride in seeing the ones I had mothered make good and come back, a year later, already famous. Somehow, I felt that I had a small share in their triumphs.

It was always a sad moment when the Trojans broke camp. There they were, going off to the great cities of the land, to the glittering theaters, to the magnificent hotels, to everything success could supply, while I was left to the lonesomeness and idleness of deserted Lissom Springs, with no joy but the vicarious one of reading in the newspapers about the doings of the men I knew.



As the two men glared at each other, I stood between them trembling like a leaf, too aghast to say a word.

They were coming back again, the Trojans. Rookies first, a full week of them. Then came all the veteran players.

A big, sandy-haired boy from North Carolina was among the newcomers, a boy of, say, twenty-four, but so unspoiled that he seemed younger. Six feet two he stood, a young mountain giant, weighing one hundred and ninety pounds, and yet, beneath his shambling shyness, as lithe as a panther.

George Blaine was his name: and his nickname, I learned, was "Easy."

He told me that himself.

"Yes, Miss, 'Easy' is what they call me," he confessed, laughingly. "It's a polite way of saying 'lazy' an' I reckon 'tain't altogether wrong."

IN A short while we became very good friends. We went to the movies a lot together, even on the nights when the weekly dance was being held.

"I ain't much account at this yere dancin'," George Blaine told me, so I didn't do much dancing myself that season. "It's right obligin' of you not to," George said, "an' I feel a little



"So that's why you wouldn't go to the movies with me?" said George Blaine. The air was tense with anger. "Look here, bush leaguer," Bradley answered, "I don't think you are entitled to explanations, but I took the lady out for a ride to ask her to be my wife."

guilty that I should be spoilin' your fun, but I reckon I'm a mite selfish, as well as lazy. It's a bad combination, ain't it?"

We went for walks together, in the white of the Texas moon, after the movies. Or, again, we sat on the hotel porch and rocked softly until the eleven o'clock bed hour came, talking or listening to the Trojans' quartet, over in the corner, harmonizing the old sentimental favorites.

ONCE George's big hand reached over and covered mine. He squeezed it gently, while my heart quivered in a new and amazing excitement, then he withdrew it swiftly.

"Reckon I'm makin' a nuisance of myself," he whispered. "No," I answered huskily.

"Reckon I am, though," he insisted and for the rest of the evening he was silent.

Dolly Wayne spoke to me when I was going to my room.

"He's a nice boy, Miriam," she said. "A nice, clean boy, and he only needs someone to wake a spark of ambition in him. I hope—" but she broke off without saying what she hoped, and then suddenly took me in her arms and kissed me.

I cried that night before I went to sleep. It was the first time in my life I remembered crying from anything other than lonesomeness.

It became more and more apparent at each practice that George Blaine's nickname, "Easy," was justified. He just couldn't, or wouldn't, perform as a big league pitcher must. I

had watched enough baseball to realize that he was not making good, and some of the conversation I overheard confirmed this.

One day, towards the end of the training period, Bill Mullins was standing at the cigar counter, beside my cashier's cage, puffing on a big cigar. The grizzled, wise old manager was chatting with Artie Schwartz, his assistant and one of the best judges of baseball players in the game.

"Blaine's a mystery to me," Mullins confessed. "He's got everything a pitcher needs, but he doesn't deliver. I guess I can't waste any more time on him. Have to let him out."

"He's worth more trouble, if there's a possible chance," Artie Schwartz argued. "That boy can be the greatest of them all, if he only gets started once."

"Maybe you're right, Artie; maybe you are. But I like self-starters, myself. I'm getting to be too old a man to spend my life trying to crank a motor that won't turn over."

"Still, you ought to give him one more whirl, chief."

"Well, maybe one," Bill Mullins agreed, as he walked away.

BIG FRED WAYNE had told me the same thing about him; and so had Bradley Lord, the great outfielder and batter, who had been one of my pets a few years back.

"Blaine can be just as good as he wants to be," Bradley Lord said. "but, to tell you the truth, Miriam, he doesn't seem to want to be very good. You ought to get hold of him and pep him up. You can do it, if you try." [Continued on page 134]



*The Life Story
of a
Victim of Circumstances*

Forgive Me

A LONE in New York, and youthfully eager for a good time I accepted an invitation to attend the opera with my employer, John L. Karby. Afterwards, under pretense of taking me to a restaurant, he took me to his own apartment, where we were trailed by Mrs. Karby's detectives seeking evidence on which to divorce him. Innocent of any wrong I was nevertheless named as co-respondent and the scandal killed my

mother. Seeking justice, I went to the office where I had formerly been employed and found Mr. Karby in conference with his wife to whom he had been reconciled. I was ordered out. I almost fainted as I reached the door, but a courteous young gentleman took me home in his car. I was grateful to him until I discovered that he was Kenneth Karby and then I wanted him to get out of my sight.



"It was the cleverest robbery I ever heard of" Mrs. Karby said. "Miss Gray here held me in conversation—" "I suggest that you tell that to the police," said my employer.

My Trespasses

"JUST one more word," Kenneth said quickly. "I am going to see you again some time. Remember that! You know whether you are on the square or not. If you are, you can count on one friend in the Karby family. If you are crooked, expect nothing from me. Good-by, Miss Lane."

I was in my shabby little bedroom face to face with myself. What was I to do? What could I do? I could con-

tinue my present occupation as a mannikin in the cloak and suit house. I could go back to all that hated life.

But now, knowing that my chance for vindication in the courts was forever past, the thought of going back filled my very soul with loathing. I wanted, oh so desperately, to be free from the poisonous atmosphere of scandal! I wanted to stand alone, clean. The defensive attitude, the hard shell of



I was now Kathleen Gray. The notorious Savannah Lane was gone. I was the kind of girl who would be a safe governess for young children

sophistication that I had been forced to assume, weighed on me with painful, crushing cruelty.

Oh, if my beloved mother had only been alive, I could have flown back to her sheltering arms. I could have swept my sorrow out on her understanding heart, and been soothed as a child, but I stood alone! My father, with his cold New England conscience had cast me off.

I was nineteen; a woman in form, but in my heart a hurt, trembling child. If there had only been one friend to whom I could have turned, but when I thirsted for love and understanding and kindness, my love was unslaked in the burning desert that is called New York.

WITH all my heart, I wanted love. I wanted to feel the sweet soul-comforting vibrations of that most wonderful of all human emotions. I wanted to be loved and I wanted to give love. The yearning for it became a tortuous desire. I wanted love, clear-eyed and innocent, uncontaminated by the sordid substitute that expresses itself in caresses and sin. I wanted the real thing. I wanted to be filled to overflowing.

A secret voice spoke to me:

"To find love, first you must give it."

Whence came that voice? Why was it there arose in me a new self, charged with infinite wisdom? Again the clew to all human happiness was repeated in simple words that wrote themselves across my mind, that spelled out a message as though traced by a moving finger. Strange! On a few, pitifully few, occasions, I have been so guided by some such mystic advice

"To find love, first you must give it."

Yes, that was the present solution of all my troubles. To give love. Something warm, almost maternal, began to grow in my heart. Surely, with its teeming millions, there was a real need for love in New York. Yes, a tragic need; a need that could be, in some way, linked up with my own necessity. Love, free from blight, free from suspicion, free from the soul corrupting madness of humanity's inhumanity. I thought of the pure love of a little child. I had taken the first step to follow out the clew that had been given unto me.

Children! Why not? Surely, somewhere within my reach was a home where I might be with children. A lingering streak of personal pride turned me from the idea of being a nurse. I was sincere, yet I had my share of human vanity. Nevertheless, I bought a newspaper and turned to the Help-Wanted section.

Columns of jobs stared out at me, but always with the objectionable social drawback of domestic service. Something in me revolted against being a nurse or a cook, second girl or a house-keeper. I, Savannah Lane, was not born for domestic servitude. Mine, I felt, was a different caliber. Then I noticed one brief advertisement:

GOVERNNESS wanted to care for two children five and seven years old. Long Island home. Good wages. Dignified position.

A governess!

The word to me had a certain distinction, almost a charm, with its hint of educational association.

A governess should be a lady.

Yes, but Savannah Lane, in the eyes of the world, was distinctly not a lady. My name was so notorious, so fresh in the public eye that it was a brand of shame. In no self-respecting house would I be admitted. I knew that.

But there was a way!

I would discard my own name as though it were a soiled and tattered garment. An assumed name, a form of deceit, but within my power. I had the ability to blot out forever the Savannah Lane of unsavory repute.

I read the advertisement again with growing interest. This was my chance if I cared to take it—the way out, my open door. If not this particular position then a similar one. Yet this opportunity seemed exactly the one I needed.

I wrote a letter of application to see how my qualifications would shape up on paper.

THE children, the advertisement had stated, were five and seven years old. My education, surely, was sufficient. I had graduated from high school with splendid marks. Good breeding—I paused thoughtfully with the pen-holder between my teeth. Frankly, I admitted to myself that I might be deficient in polish, in a thousand little tricks of manner and behavior, but I knew, instinctively, that good breeding meant nothing more than consideration for others.

The letter lay written before me awaiting the signature. What should I call myself. At this crisis, I searched my soul to see if I had the courage to slip out of my shell, to bid good-by forever to the girl and the personality and the name



Young Karby looked at me and smiled. "You don't talk like a bad one," he said, "and I don't believe you are. I think you're a darned nice girl and I'm going to help you."

I had always known. It was no easy matter to step out of myself and become another person. Tears got in my eyes, and the written application was a blur before me.

All of this hesitation, I told myself, was silly. I wrote down the first name that came into my head. For no reason at all it was "Kathleen Gray".

Kathleen Gray! No sooner had I written down the name than the interest in this new personality began to grow. Who was Kathleen Gray? Where had she come from? What did the future hold for her?

With a queer little thrill I realized that I had the power of creating a new human being; that I could give to Kathleen

Gray almost any character or history I chose. She was a new person in this world, and I could mould her after my own desires.

I went to the mirror and looked at myself. I was Kathleen Gray. As for a background, I decided to retain my own; my own home life and upbringing, before I came to New York, would stand, with merely the change of the family name from Lane to Gray.

Kathleen Gray had come to New York, had worked as a stenographer for a while and had then decided to change her occupation. I smiled a little, seriously. Already I had begun to feel a subtle change creeping through [Continued on page 127]



"I kept my word," said Garth. "I got your letters back. Now we're through. I'm not working for you any longer and from now on you'll keep your hands off this girl."

Love Double-

TODAY people no longer believe that women can be made slaves, except, perhaps, in Oriental countries. They no longer believe that in modern America a woman can be under the absolute dominion of a man whom she loathes, in reality his slave.

Yet I, who write this, have been a slave, the victim of a man I hated and yet from whom I could not escape.

I wonder if I can picture for you the kind of home in

which I grew up? My whole story depends upon that. It was a small city in Massachusetts. My father was a clergyman, a simple, kindly man who believed whatever was told to him. My mother was from stern, Puritan stock, but in her grim way, underneath her cold and pious manner, I knew she loved me, her only child, with all her heart.

When anyone stops to remember the war, it seems astonishing that it was so long ago. To me it seems only yesterday when I knew young Tom Marley, from Camp Devens,



*If You Were
Enslaved
By Some One You
Feared
Wouldn't You Love
the Man
Who Rescued You?
Then What
if He, too, Turned
Traitor?*

Crossed Me

and experienced the feverish emotions of those thrilling days. I was seventeen. Tom was in his early twenties. He had been one of the secretaries of the big politician, Senator X—

In those impulsive, almost hysterical times Tom and I told each other that we were terribly in love. I knew my father and mother would have frowned upon any love affair at my age, but like all young, romantic girls, I felt I was old enough to know everything. So I concealed my feelings, letting them think that Tom was just a young soldier who

I did not know when I kissed Tom good-by in the morning, it was in reality, for the last time.

No, he was not like the villain of a story. I know he meant to marry me. Sometimes I even think that in his last hours he must have been tortured by his inability to keep his word.

For when, after weeks of silence, weeks of doubt and shame, I went almost frantically to Camp Devens to find out why he did not answer me, I learned the bitter truth.

In that unforgotten and devastating attack of influenza

came over to see me now and then from Devens, that he was only a casual friend.

Then Tom had a week's leave. His people were dead, and he was terribly lonely. He came to my town and stayed there, and I saw him all that week.

On the last afternoon of his leave he confessed to me that he had a premonition he wouldn't live through the war.

He asked me to marry him right away without telling anyone, before he left for the front. In the glow of the moment I promised to do so on his next leave.

And then, driven by one of those storms of emotion which seem to make everything else trivial, I flung my caution and my mother's austere training to the winds. That night I telephoned a lie to my people, saying that I was staying with a friend.



As I mended Garth's coat I had a sudden inspiration. I took out the letters that I carried with me and found at last a hiding place I could trust. The

what was left of the camp like fire, Tom Marley died. His prediction had been right though he had never reached the front.

No use describing my dismay, my grief, on that morning when I heard the news. White-faced and terrified, I wandered out of the office. I felt if I didn't have someone to advise me where to go to comfort me I would go mad. And I couldn't tell any people. It would break my father's heart, destroy my

mother's pride. They couldn't understand or sympathize.

It was an evil morning for me—that morning I learned that Senator X—had arrived at the camp that day to make an address to the soldiers.

The Senator was Tom's former employer and in my hunger to talk to someone who had known Tom, I went to him.

He was a red-faced man, with the manner of one accustomed to large dealings and with a wide range of experience



me night and day and slipped them under the lining. Then I sewed them up inside I had things that meant my freedom were now safe.

It seemed to me he must be at least as old as my father.

In my simplicity I poured out my whole story. I noticed that he questioned me a good deal, and I thought it was merely because I had excited his sympathy.

What he should have done, of course, is clear. He should have sent me home with a few words of friendly counsel. I was an ignorant and frightened girl.

Instead he found out everything, where I lived, my parents'

position, their attitude towards me, their love for me. Then he told me he would communicate with me later on.

I smile grimly now when I recall how I thanked him.

I went home, thinking of poor Tom. He had been kind; he had really loved me. I mourned him now, and told myself I'd never forget.

It was just about two weeks later and while I was still dazed from the shock of what had [Continued on page 140]



"*IF MY home is ever broken up,*" writes this wife, "it will not be because I have ceased to love my husband. It will be because of a good woman—my mother-in-law." SMART SET had thought mothers-in-law were no longer problems. But perhaps we are wrong. Has this wife just cause for complaint? What have you young married folks, as well as you mothers-in-law, to say about the situation revealed in this true story? Who is really at fault in this home?

Did I Marry

I MEANT to love her when I married her son. In fact, we were fairly good friends before Tom and I were engaged.

We belonged to the same church society. I had served at her table at a church fair. She was lovely to me and I liked her.

She often spoke to me of her son and one night when he called at the fair to take her home I met him.

I was attracted to him at once. He had the same kind of dark eyes that his mother has, only hers are bright while his are soft and gentle. His manner towards her is ideal. I admired it then. I have grown weary of it since.

Tom Maitland's father died when he was a baby, leaving his widow with a too-small income. She was determined that her son should have a college education such as his father had had. To this end she developed her one talent, writing. She

is fond of remarking that with her pen she kept the wolf from the door and poked Tom through school and the university.

The first time I heard her say this was when I knew the son only slightly. I saw the smile with which he greeted her remark. I thought myself that it was rather humorous, but I was not in love with Tom at that time.

Had I a daughter, I would advise her never to marry the only son of a widow.

I know people say that a good son makes a good husband. He does, perhaps, if his mother lets him. Often he has such a strong devotion for his mother that it affects all his other relations in life. A psychoanalyst explained to me that this is what is known as the oedipus complex. Perhaps it is. Anyway it is mighty uncomfortable for a wife.

But I am getting ahead of my story. On the night when



My *Mother-in-Law?*

I met Tom his mother suggested that he and she take me home in a taxi. I thought it rather queer that she did not go home by herself and let Tom act as my escort, but I did not say anything except "Thank you!"

When we reached my home, Tom went up the steps with me and waited to put me on the elevator. In those three minutes when we were alone together he asked if he could call on me the next week. I said that I would be glad to see him at any time. I meant it. I liked him very much and was glad that the attraction seemed mutual.

Our acquaintance ripened rapidly. He called on me at least once a week, sometimes oftener. He explained that on Sundays he always stayed with his mother or took her out somewhere.

"She finds Sunday depressing," he remarked. "Ever since my father's death she has dreaded being left alone on the

days when she cannot work. As Sunday is my one free day, I devote it to her."

Thus it came about that when I invited Tom to Sunday night supper, I also invited Mrs. Maitland. She always came. My family liked her immensely.

"She is a delightful woman," my father declared. "I am glad that you have her for a friend, Ruth."

"Yes," my mother observed, "and she must have been an ideal mother. Her son is evidently devoted to her."

"He certainly is," I agreed. "I think he is rather silly about her. He seems to feel that he owes all that he is to her."

"And he does!" my father affirmed stoutly. "I have talked to her of her work and I find that ever since she was widowed, when her child was only two years old, she has supported him. No wonder she looks so fragile."

"Tom says that she has wonderful [Continued on page 96]

Panther Woman

*This Husband's Story
Warns of the
DANGERS
That Lurk
for Every Man and
EVERY WOMAN
in the Land of the
LOTUS FLOWER*



WHY is it that a cow will disdain the fresh sweet hay stacked in her own enclosure, and paralyze the roots of her tongue trying to reach a weed growing outside the fence? I can't answer for the cow but I can tell the story of a man who had no more sense than this dumb animal. I know the man very well, better now than before he was drawn from his own cloistered married paradise outside the fence into an affair of unholy love and deceit.

In short, behold the man! Myself! Evelyn was nineteen when we married and I twenty-seven. She was dark as a dreamy Asiatic twilight, and I blond as a golden apple. Evelyn was soft, yielding and feminine, and I eager, aggressive and masculine. She had an inherited trust fund from which she drew a modest income, a satisfying spirit of independence, while I from a pleasant profession, averaged better than ten thousand a year. To all appearances Evelyn and I were outward bound with a fair wind and a running tide—our marital sails trimmed wing and wing.

The one flaw that threatened our happiness was my mother-in-law, but Evelyn herself solved that problem by urging me to accept an offer that meant moving from New York to Hong Kong. My job is to write descriptive booklets for a great steamship and railroading organization and to collect picture material for the artists who paint the posters and illustrate the travel booklets I write.

I was thrilled at the opportunity. The trip would cost nothing as we would be traveling and sailing the entire distance on our own trains and marvellous ships.

"WHY are you here?" Kalijah asked. "Because I couldn't forget you," I told her. But the woman only sneered. "You conceited peacock, do you know that my lovers are princes? Now go back to that young wife of yours while I am still willing to let you."

The last sight we had of Evelyn's mother was from the rail of the Empress in Vancouver! As the ship was ready to sail she embarrassed me by calling from the dock "Good-by, precious lamb. Take care of my little baby girl, won't you Jack!"

While Evelyn was leaning over the rail waving good-by to her mother a soft, deep voice whispered in my ear, "You ought to be happy to escape that!"

The reason I did not indignantly turn on the speaker was because she had touched me with her voice. It was the most



OR Wife?

cause Evelyn looked at me in a sudden alarm: "Why Jack, you're quite pale."

"Just thrilled with happiness, pet," I said.

"I understand, dear," she sighed. "Mother wouldn't like it if she knew what I was saying, but it is wonderful to have you all to myself."

To herself! How little she knew; how little I knew at the time.

Two days after the Empress stuck her prow valiantly into the northwest swing across the Pacific, Evelyn was so seasick that she thought she was going to die. She knew the next lurch of the mighty steamer would mark the end of her days on earth: I nursed her as best I could.

BUT it mattered not whether the ship was standing on her nose or plunging down miles of white foam, I couldn't get the thought of that panther woman out of my head. All I could see was that trim, lithe, alluring woman. Her narrow square shoulders, her slender supple waist, her ravishing, slim ankles, and oh—damn, her short skirts!

What she looked like from the front, I hadn't the faintest idea. Suppose she proved ugly? No, that could not be. Then I wondered if she were one of those fortunate beings who in the worst seas, are ever good sailors. Just the faint chance of her being one of these thrice blessed—kept me from going up for air. She'd never catch me off my looks! I did not want the panther to see me unless I were at my best.

Four days out from Victoria after the storm had abated I showed myself in a few brisk turns on the promenade. Evelyn had insisted that I go. For herself, she deemed it heavenly to sit propped up with the northwest breeze blowing in through the open port.

I had gone to the salon for a drink when Jordan Fletcher, one of the big guns of our company who was on board, came in and joined me. He wanted to know how Evelyn had stood the tail of the monsoon. Couldn't have been anything else but a monsoon, it had been so fierce, he insisted, but we'd have marvelous sailing when the course altered to southwest. The weather disposed of, he got to making comments on the various people sitting around the tables near us. The trip to the Orient was an annual occurrence for him. It kept him alive and kicking, he said.

Then Mr. Fletcher unexpectedly began to give me advice, perhaps to warn me about my job.

"You see, I've been out to the East very often," he said, "and I can give you a pointer or two. From Hong Kong it will be easy for you to strike almost anywhere at short notice—the Malay Peninsula, Borneo, Shanghai. And you'll see a good many women, the kind of women who certainly don't grow on trees back home, beautiful things and the deadliest creatures that walk under the sun! Believe me, I don't exaggerate. If there's anything outside of a Bengal tiger to equal one of the beautiful Eurasian girls in cunning, grace, and ferocity, I'd like to see it!"

crooning, seductive voice I had ever heard, yet I pretended not to have heard at all.

But, as the ship glided from the pier, I felt the brush of her body against my side. It could not have been accidental. I construed it as a deliberate, unspoken, 'Look me over if you can, safely!'

In spite of myself I turned to see what kind of a woman this could be. She moved along the promenade like a gliding panther. In the swift glance that I cast at her receding figure I felt a guilty thrill, which must have shown in my face be-

I laughed. "I know how to take care of myself by this time, Mr. Fletcher."

"Don't be too sure, boy. There are women in the land of the Lotus Flower unlike the women you've known, and there are men to match them. Take my advice, don't ever leave your wife alone in China for the sake of both of you."

The idea that Evelyn's sincere love could for one moment be diverted from me struck me as preposterous, but he went on after a moment.

"You see, there are men in these China seas who can charm a bride away from her husband before she's been married twenty minutes, if they can have ten minutes alone with her. While as for the women, Jack—"

A PEAL of laughter caused us both to turn toward the deck door of the salon. A gust of wind seemed to have blown in two girls. One of them was my panther woman.

I averted my eyes as if unaffected by their entrance. Fletcher's head was doing a twist like a merry-go-round. He drew a sharp breath and I was struck with the thought that he knew the women.

"Take these two for instance," he said, turning to me again. "You saw them break from the deck into this crowded room, didn't you? Well, I'm willing to wager they timed that break. I am willing to bet further—that that's the first time the deck door has been opened by a woman today. We've got a stiff beam breeze blowing and those girls knew they couldn't show off their samples any better than by coming in on their customers, on a high wind."

I had to laugh, long and genuinely. I was aware that my panther woman was watching me.

"I'm long since bullet proof on any sheenanigan of that sort," said Fletcher, "but Jack, there's more than one man here who's not!"

I probably winced as he said this, because he looked directly at me. "How about you?" he asked suddenly.

"Really haven't given them a thought," I said.

"Well, they're blazing away at this table right this minute, the little one in particular. She's got you spotted, sure."

The purser's clerk came to the table and handed Mr. Fletcher a note. He got up, explaining his wife had sent for him.

"Better go look your wife up Jack and tell her to send for you. Here, Mr. Purser's clerk. I want you to meet our Mr. Smith. Pass the word to all our agents that he and Mrs. Smith are not to be neglected; tell them I said so. See you later Jack, and remember!" he said.

"My name is Gordon, Mr. Smith," said the Purser's clerk. "The mess will be pleased to have you join in any time."

"Won't you sit down, Gordon?"

"Thanks, not while on duty sir. Some other time gladly." I sat for awhile smoking cigarettes. When I got up and moved toward the door I could feel the scorch of my panther woman's eyes. She was, indeed, blazing away at me.

That bid to join the petty officers in their ward room gatherings proved my plausible alibi for the many hours I revoltingly spent away from Evelyn. The first night I went there, Gordon the purser's clerk, had told me there was to be a strictly stag showing of a moving picture.

In the mess Gordon told me quietly that a lady who had seen him talking to me in the bar salon was very anxious to meet me. Was I game? She was safe, she had a friend with her and together they occupied a connecting suite. The finest on the ship. Gordon liked the idea because, as he said, the friend had fancied him. They were top hole entertainers and

neither of us would be expected to buy so much as a drink.

We slipped away from the highly diverting moving picture, and in a part of the ship far away from our state-room I found Kalijah, my panther woman.

When she left the ship days later at Woosung bar to make the trip to Shanghai, I felt that a heavy stone had been lifted from my heart. From there to Hong Kong I oppressed Evelyn with my ardent kisses trying in that way to soothe my degraded conscience. If only I could have forgotten when we got to Hong Kong and settled in a picturesque cottage on the park overlooking the beautiful bay! But no, the panther woman's lure and overpowering fascination came again beckoning me back to her across the thousand miles of China seas that now lay between us.

Evelyn and I had been received with open arms by the American colonists of Hong Kong and Evelyn's beauty and obvious breeding gave her and me a magic open sesame to the homes and clubs of the charming English residents. The nature of my work, our lovely home, our evident devotion to each other brought the entire settlement to our feet.

But that deadly siren song came wooing me; then I remembered Kalijah's care that I might not be seen with her or even have it known that I knew her.

MY SECRET was therefore my own. I need never be detected and if I could keep myself from a repetition of my weakness, my happiness with Evelyn would never be threatened. It all lay in my hands. Realizing what Evelyn's faith and pure affection meant, I made a mighty struggle to put the panther woman out of my brain forever.

Then one day I saw a Eurasian girl in Cook's office, and I nearly cried out, "Kalijah!" For the Malay half caste was everything but my panther woman.

I tried to fight the image this almost twin woman suggested, but my fevered brain conquered utterly. I gave up and began to plan a trip to Shanghai, to Kalijah, with all the cunning of a maniac who plans to commit a crime. I coolly told Evelyn that Jordan Fletcher had mapped out a working schedule for me which of necessity left her out.

"But why?" she asked tremulously. "I don't understand."

"Because he's asked me to visit the Jesuit Monastery on the outskirts of Shanghai's Chinese city. He insisted that I go alone. I will have to pass through the pestilential native city and he told me people get the terrible Yangtze plague just by passing through the dreadful place."

"But if there's any danger, I want to be with you," she said.

"Well, it's out of the question," I snapped. "Fletcher particularly told me not to take you."

It seemed to me, while I was thus lying myself into the most infamous humiliation that a human ass could ever blunder into, that Evelyn was heroically battling an impulse

to burst into tears. Her dark eyes kept pouring some message into mine but I was too blind to see and too vile to care to. I hadn't even the patience to defer my start two days and so make the trip to Shanghai on one of our own company boats. No, I had to connect with a French steamer coasting the seaports from the Indian ocean to the South Pacific and leave at once. I had a thousand dollars in American money with me. In Shanghai that equalled two thousand Mex, enough money to live modestly anywhere in China forever almost.

When I burst like a jubilant school boy out of the motor car that had taken me from my Bund hotel out to Kalijah's place I no longer had the slightest pang of remorse at my betrayal of Evelyn. I was like a [Continued on page 119]



Spring Fever



BIRDS are not the only creatures to migrate in the springtime! Behold Gladys Harvey, Rose Lane and Edna Marian! Tiring of walking the ties to fame via Christie Comedies they try slow freight. (The cruel lady orders, "Woodpile or no breakfast" so Barbara Worth does the heavy while Gladys Harvey stands by.



White Studio

Rolling Down

SOME new home!
SOME new show!
SOME new girls!
That tells the story
of Mr. Ziegfeld's
house-warming in
his beautiful new
theater. Above are
the "gentlemen" of
the chorus, who
prove, on the follow-
ing page, that it
only takes clothes
—and beauty—to
make pirates.

DeRamon

A lass of old
Ireland is Kath-
arine Burke but
figures know no
nationality in a
Ziegfeld produc-
tion



Alfred Cheney Johnston

In spite of the skull and cross-bones we are convinced
that Kay English is only a love-pirate.



White Studio

to Rio Rita



Alfred Cheney Johnston

A Rio Rita
evening gown in
the making —
with the lovely
form of Mil-
dred Lumay as
the inspiration.



Alfred
Cheney
Johnston

And in this Spanish Senorita you may recognize
Marion Benda as a decorative bridesmaid.



Cunnings

OLIVE BORDEN'S star is on the rise. This young film actress has come into her own. Born in the Sunny South—in Virginia to be exact—she was a dancer before she began playing in "extra parts" in the movies. So it was only a step from there to stardom in Fox Films.

The Story of a Man Who Lived to Regret His Wild Oats



*I Never Worried About
My Wife's Flirtations Until*

The Time

She DIDN'T Tell

"YOU'LL regret all this, you know," a friend said once to me.

"when you fall genuinely in love."

I laughed scornfully. The Victorian age, I told him, was at an end. Women weren't the demure dolls that our great grandparents had known; they realized that a man must sow wild oats. Indeed, as often as not the modern girl despises the man who hasn't. She wouldn't say thank you for the person whom no other woman has found any use for. "When I fall in love" I told him, "it won't be with a woman who is asking for a plaster saint."

And in that, at least, I prophesied correctly. Joan, when I told her, as I felt bound to tell her, what my life had been in the days before we met, was neither angry nor reproachful. She

was not even particularly surprised. She had been brought up in her modern way to think men were made like that. But I can say without hypocrisy that for me that half hour of confessional was the most wretched of my life. There is nothing I would not have given to have had the details of those years unhappened. It is one thing to boast of one's experiences in one's club smoking room after dinner. But it is quite another thing when you meet a young and innocent girl who seems different from any woman that you have ever known; to whom there is nothing, no secret thought or hope you do not wish to give; whose faith in you is the greatest stimulant to ambition that you will ever know; it is different then, and it is terrible to feel at such a moment that you cannot come to her as she comes to you, in purity and

innocence; that you cannot meet one another on the common ground of inexperience; that there are some things that you will be unable ever to share with her.

"You can't think," I said to her, "how tawdry you make everything that has happened to me seem. You can't think how bitterly I regret it, how much I could wish it all unhappened. It never would have happened," I pleaded, "if I had known that there would exist such a person as yourself. If I had known that such a marvellous thing as this love of ours was awaiting me, I would have kept myself clean for it, but I didn't know, that is my one excuse. I didn't know. And because I didn't know I contented myself with what there was."

Joan sat very still and silent, as I spoke to her. I was at her feet and my head was resting back upon her knees; and as I spoke her fingers caressed my hair.

"I understand," she said at last. "Don't be unhappy, dear. I understand. It's over now."

My heart pounded with relief.

"Over, completely over," I protested. "There isn't the least likelihood of it happening again. It's a closed book never to be re-opened."

THAT was how I saw it. For all my regret and shame that was how I saw it: as a closed book never to be re-opened. I did not realize—does anyone of us ever realize it till the truth of it is forced on him?—that one's past can never be shut away: that it is a part permanently of oneself. The wild oats which I so regretted had entered into and helped to form my whole attitude to life and love, an attitude that I was to realize later was capable of overturning my happiness.

That realization came in the fourth year of my marriage, suddenly, as such things always do, out of the least clouded of blue skies. It was at the Marston's dance, during the interval for supper. I had gone back to the hallroom in search of a fan that my partner had forgotten, and as I passed through one of the drawing-rooms, I saw, reflected in a mirror at the far end of the passage, my wife sitting on a sofa with a young man. I could not see the expression of her face but the light in the young man's eyes was eager and one of her hands was pressed tightly between his. For a moment I hesitated, then walked away.

It was a surprise, but not a shock to me. Joan was very lovely, and there are a great many men to whom the four-years-married wife is the fairest of fair game. More than one man during the last few months had flirted with her, and she would tell me about it afterwards with delight, considering everything that had been said and suggested to her the greatest possible joke.

"Oh darling," she would say the moment the door of the car had been closed on us. "Do you know what Harry said to me tonight. It was too funny. Do listen."

THIS incident I imagined was on a par with the rest. As soon as we got back she would begin to tell me about it. "Oh darling, such fun" she would start, and I swore to myself that I would not spoil her pleasure in recounting it, by telling her that her news was already familiar to me.

It was a good dance, the floor was smooth and not too slippery; the band rhythmic and not too loud; the champagne was both plentiful and dry, but quite early in the evening



As I passed through one of the drawing-rooms, I saw reflected in a mirror at the far end of the passage, my wife, sitting on a sofa with a young man. I could not see the expression on her face, but the light in the young man's eyes was eager and one of her hands was pressed between his.

Joan came to me and suggested that we should go home. "I'm sorry," she said. "Do you mind, I'm feeling desperately sleepy."

And indeed there was a strained unhappy look about her eyes.

"You've enjoyed the dance, haven't you?" I asked as we made our way down the steps toward our car.

"Oh yes," she answered, "quite."

"And who," I asked, "was your most amusing partner?"

"My most amusing partner? Oh, I don't know. Johnnie Green, I think." The reply came negligently and listlessly, and I looked at her with some surprise. It was curious that she should have made no reference to the young man with whom I had seen her. It was curious also now I came to think of it that she should be looking so exhausted and depressed after an experience that most women would have found uncommonly exhilarating, but perhaps she was only waiting till we got back home.

She was, however, no more communicative on our return. "I'm going straight up," she said. "I shall fall asleep the

moment my head touches the pillow." But though I lingered a long while in my study over my pipe I noticed as I walked down the passage towards my dressing-room, a gleam of light beneath her door. Worried, she might be, perhaps, but sleepy apparently no.

There was little rest for me that night. Argument after argument I brought forward to explain away Joan's curious behavior, but always this fact remained: that Joan had been made love to by a young man, and that for the first time in her life she had preferred to say nothing to me about it. And as the leaden hours passed I could not rid myself of the memory of a cynical confession made once to me. "Oh, I always tell my husband," the woman had said. "about the men



who tried to hold my hand at dinner-parties, so that he won't suspect me when I'm really serious." That any such plan should have passed through Joan's mind was of course unthinkable, but I could not help wondering whether that cynical admission might not be applicable to my own case, whether Joan had only told me on the other occasions, because they had been unimportant, but had remained silent on this occasion because it had been important. Could that be the explanation? The other men had not mattered; she had never considered it possible that she should respond to their ardor. They had been jokes to share with her husband. But it was different in the case of this young man. He mattered. And one is silent about the things that count. Relentlessly the thought beat upon my brain: "Joan has fallen in love."

NEXT morning, before I set out for my office, I went up to her room. She was sitting propped up among her pillows, her breakfast, scarcely touched, was pushed away from

her, her letters lay unopened upon the tray, her eyes were tired as though she had not slept. For a few moments I tried to talk genially of various matters, leading the conversation round at last towards the dance, but she was fretful and impatient.

"I'm sorry, dear," she said, "I'm tired this morning, and rather stupid. I guess late nights don't agree with me."

My heart was heavy as I left the house. There could be no longer any doubt about it. Joan was going to tell me nothing whatsoever of what might have transpired between her and that young man on the previous evening. For that there could be one explanation only: that she was either in love, or half in love, with him.

To me the whole situation was utterly, devastatingly incomprehensible. I did not begin to understand it. We were so happy together, Joan and I, or rather I had fancied that we were. The first flush of romance had subsided, as was natural and inevitable, but surely its place had been taken by something sounder, saner, more permanent. I could not have hoped for things to turn out more happily. But as I began to reason it out with myself, the first clue to the explanation came to me. Our marriage might have developed along the lines that

I, in my experience, had expected, but it might not have developed along the lines that Joan, in her inexperience, had looked for. It might be that the present crisis was due to the disparity between her dream and the reality.

It was then that I realized how vain and profitless it is to imagine that the past can ever be closed like a book that has been read. Its influence remains. My experience with other women had told me that infatuation was of the things that die, and consequently when I saw it beginning to wane between myself and Joan, I had accepted that waning as something that was bound to happen. I had not been alarmed, as an inexperienced man in my place would have been. And because I had not been alarmed I had behaved as a man who looks at a fire and says, "That will go out in time," and leaves it.

I HAD put on no fresh fuel. Or rather I had left it for some other man to rekindle the dying flame. For months, probably, Joan had been wretchedly conscious of the changing situation, a change that nothing in her experience had led her to expect. I could see how, in the nature of things, she would respond to the man who should seem to be to her all that I had been and had ceased to be. It was a bitter moment. This was the punishment, I saw, for the host of tawdry romances into which I had drifted so casually and which had spoiled me now for making a success of the one real love that had come into my life.

It was the memory and influence of those earlier affairs that had led me to neglect the care and the attention, the display of ardor that Joan had looked for.

That night I suggested that it was time we repaid a debt of hospitality to some of our friends by giving a dinner party. Without enthusiasm Joan acceded. "Whom shall we ask?" she said. I rattled off some names, to each of which she nodded her head apathetically. "That makes nine," she said at last, "we want another man."

"What about that nice young man we met at Marston's the other night?" I said.

I watched her closely as I spoke, and she behaved as I had expected, as I had feared that she would behave. Her first impulse was to refuse, and her lips had begun to frame the words but she hesitated, realizing that she would be able to find no reasonable excuse for her refusal.

"Very well," she said. "He can take in Peggy. They'd probably amuse each other."

Before that dinner party was over I knew beyond all question that Joan and the boy were in love with one another. I had had to see them together to make quite certain. Now that I had, it would have been idle to doubt any longer. One had only to watch the glow in his [Continued on page 101]

YOU MEN ARE ONLY Playthings of Women

By *Lady Drummond Hay*
Who Has Been Called
A Beautiful Woman With Brains

I'VE never wanted to be a man. I'd rather be a woman. The cleverest man is but a plaything for a clever woman. I don't envy men their lot one little bit. What chance has a man when it comes to a battle of wits against the daughters of Eve? They're only the channels for the will of women, and when it comes to doing anything really big, they are at a disadvantage, paradoxical as that may seem. Men are so unsubtle. They call it being straightforward but it's only clumsy. A woman can be just as straightforward, yet polish the blunt edge of the operating knife with a little tact and graciousness.

I love my femininity, and would not give it up for the most dazzling prospect of emancipation, if that emancipation were to mean that I had to copy the masculine type of woman, who despairs frills and furbelows as impedimenta to progress.

When I was a little girl wearing fluffy white things, I was shown a red, wrinkly object in shawls and was told it was a boy cousin. "Poor little thing!" I thought, "how sad for it. It will grow up into a man." Perhaps this was the thought which awakened my conscious satisfaction in my femininity.

As a schoolgirl I suppose I must have been a precocious psychologist, fascinated with my own reflections as to the ways and means, the arts and wiles by which the great feminine figures in history achieved their everlasting halo of romance. It was not what they did that interested me so much, but how they did it, the qualities responsible for their intriguing influence upon mankind. I used to devour the pages of history books, not so much with an eye to facts and dates, but with a heart for the romance and human appeal of their stories. The picturesque figures of the past lived, loved and died

in my vivid and colorful imagination. "Why, I am a woman too," I would repeat to myself proudly, absurdly flattered to realize that I was of the same sex as the ancient queens of men's destinies. Perhaps it was from that time that I really began to rejoice in the fact that I was a woman and not a man, and to hug to my bosom the thought that I belonged, no matter in how humble a capacity, to the numbers of those for whom the world had been but a playground. That is just what it is, a playground for any woman who is a woman.

Next to being a man I'd hate to be a masculine woman. I know lots of girls, and charming girls too, who have the misguided idea that if they shed their femininity, they will automatically acquire some of the freedom and independence of their brothers. That is not the way that I look at it. I don't want freedom and independence if it means that people are going to push me in a crowd, or stand on the toes of my perfectly good shoes, as I sway and stagger in an overloaded train, with men sitting down along both sides.

I love to be a woman because I am a woman and thoroughly enjoy and appreciate masculine attention. It's with real gratitude that I flop down in the seat vacated by mere male; it's with an ever new thrill that I receive a bunch of flowers or similar courtesy. I wouldn't like to be a man at all.

All my friends tell me that if they could be born again they would like to take the place of their brothers. "Boys have a much better time" has passed almost into a proverb, but do they? While I hear of all the wonderful things that man can achieve, and that my girl friends think they could achieve, if they were to be reborn as men, nobody seems to have taken the trouble [Continued on page 109]



Nevare, Ltd.

Here is Lady Drummond Hay in three of the moods which perhaps help her to win her way in a man's world. Frankly feminine and well equipped for her job, Lady Drummond Hay has often gained access to high places and obtained information denied to experienced male diplomats and newspaper correspondents. Be yourself, girls, and the world is yours, according to this titled authority.



Ernest Schneider, Berlin



I CAN turn men around my finger like wisps of baby ribbon and it's nothing to boast about for they love to be turned and any clever woman can do the same thing.



He Was a Man with a Million Sweethearts

I Lost My Head

I WAS just seventeen when I left high school and became an usher in the Rex Theater on Broadway. It was one of those wonderful new picture houses with two dollar reserved seats and we girls were dressed in costumes appropriate to the feature film. Sometimes we were Russian peasants or Spanish señoritas or Puritan maidens. I liked the work. The atmosphere of the theater was rich and lovely and I liked dressing up and wearing fancy clothes. I would have liked to go on the stage; but this was as near to it as I could get, and I was mighty grateful to Harry Clemons for getting me the job.

Harry was doorman at the theater and wore a maroon, gold braided uniform. He was tall and nice looking. He had been gassed in the War and that was why he liked working out of

doors. I often thought he ought to have more ambition and do something more worth while, but I liked Harry quite a lot. He boarded with us and was in love with me and wanted to marry me. He was awfully good to me, took me out his night off and always gave me nice presents on my birthday and Christmas.

My family just took it for granted that I would settle down with Harry, and I half thought so myself. Of course I did not want to go on working forever and be an old maid, and to a girl whose mother and father are Italian, seventeen is getting on in years. Still I was not so anxious to take Harry. Life, for me I felt sure, should hold something a little brighter and more romantic. I was a great one always for making believe.

My father was janitor of a big apartment on West 87th



I CANNOT describe those next two hours. They were too wonderful. The crowded restaurant, filled with people all of whom knew Duke. He seemed to hate the publicity that dogged him and escaped with me to a corner table. There he turned his back on the room and devoted himself only to me.

street. We lived in the basement; but I hated being a janitor's daughter. I always used the front entrance and would pretend to any fellows that brought me home from parties or the movies that I lived up in, not under these nice apartments.

But of course I could not bluff Harry Clemons. He knew all about me and I guess this was one reason why I didn't find him romantic enough. Otherwise he was really all right. He was brave and good-hearted. He had two medals and a book of snap shots of the interesting places he'd been and a gun from the time he'd been in the army. He was saving his money so we could get married soon, and sometimes he would laugh and call me "Ritzie Rita" and wonder how he'd be able to keep me in silk stockings when I became Mrs. Clemons.

"You ought to earn more," I once said, a lit

"I wish I could give you everything you want," he said, "like those girls in the pictures."

The pictures! If only Harry were like Duke Harlan!

Duke Harlan! That was the kind of a man I would like to marry. He was my ideal, the sort of a lover of whom I always dreamed—dashing, dark, handsome—not sensible and quiet and steady like Harry. Duke Harlan was my favorite movie star. I was crazy about him. I never missed one of his pictures and would sit through them over and over. I would catch my breath at the love scenes and clench my fists at his kisses. Oh, that was the kind of man I wanted to have take me in his arms and love me, love me till I would almost faint with joy, like the girls in the pictures. How lucky they were just to be near him, to see him, touch his hand! For me he was only a shadowy ideal.



I felt I had to tell him the truth. "It wasn't a mistake," I said. "I knew it was your car. I went there on purpose."

I never saw his name on the bill-board nor read an article about him in the papers or magazines that all the blood in my body did not seem to catch fire and rush madly through my veins. Crazy foolishness, call it what you will, the man I was in love with was a man I had never seen, Duke Harlan.

BUT what chance had I of ever meeting any man like my ideal? I ought to be thankful to have found a decent, straightforward fellow like Harry. That's what my mother often told me and I knew she was right. There were plenty of girls who would think themselves more than lucky to have Harry Clemmons, but I, I wanted something more. I was young and everyone said I was pretty. Why should I not know the kind of love Duke Harlan showed on the screen?

Then one of those strange, unexpected things happened that make a person think there must be some sort of Fate that rules our lives. One night, when Harry was taking me home after the performance, he said to me, "Duke Harlan is coming on from Hollywood for a personal appearance when we show his new picture here next month."

"Duke Harlan," I could hardly say his name, my heart was beating so hard.

Harry went on, not noticing how upset I was. "Yes! My kid brother, Paul, is his chauffeur. He's coming on East with him too. Harlan travels like regular royalty; secretary, valet and a body guard to keep off the women. Gee, Paul says it's a scream the way those fool Janes mob him every time he steps in or out of his car. He's getting to be a second Valentino, all right. Paul says he ain't such a bad feller if the women didn't try to turn his head. Out in Chicago they stormed the stage entrance and he has to keep his car parked down a side street to get away from the theater when he makes these appearances 'in person' on the stage. I bet we have a heck of a fuss, reserves out and all the rest of it when he comes here to the Rex."

"He—he's coming in—a month?" I was afraid Harry would notice the way I spoke, but he didn't.

I WENT home in a kind of a daze. It was more than happiness, an excitement so intense as to be sharp as joy. In my room I had pictures of Duke Harlan on the wall and on my bureau. In a locked drawer I had boxes full of his pictures, cut from everywhere and all the articles about him I had ever run across.

I tiptoed into the small bedroom that I shared with my two younger sisters, Nina and Marie. I shaded the light so as not to wake them up and then I took out my treasures and looked at them again, for probably the thousandth time. To think that I was actually to see him, my hero, my idol. I kissed his picture in a frenzy of delight. I touched the pictures of his face with my finger tips. Here he was in

tennis clothes, serving a ball over the net. How graceful he was! Here was one of him in a bathing suit. He was like some perfect statue, living, breathing. Here he was from his last South Sea Island film, all in white drill with a sun helmet. Every time there had been the picture of a woman with him I had carefully cut it away so that I had only him.

Lola Montrose, his leading lady. How I hated her! Blonde, slight, quite tall, everything I was not. I wondered if he really liked her. Once there had been a report of their engagement. I had not been able to sleep that night, had not known a moment's peace until a few days later when the engagement had been denied.

This may all sound absurd, crazy. A girl like me having such a crush on a man she had never seen; but there are many

like me, writing, phoning, pursuing these popular actors all the time. Only the month before I had written asking him for an autographed photograph. There had been no answer as yet; but I had watched the mail so eagerly that both my sisters kidded me. Now of course, since I knew he was on his way East I understood why my letter had been ignored.

I don't know how that month passed. I lived in a dream. It seemed too wonderful that soon he would be in New York, that I would see him every day.

SPRING was coming on. I had decided to make my last year's coat do; but now that he was coming it was not good enough. Suppose he should notice me. You never could tell. I might in some way run into him. Anyway I must have a new coat. I paid two weeks' salary down. I knew I'd be broke before I had paid it all off, but what did I care? Duke Harlan was coming.

Harry Clemons thought I was foolish to get that coat. He said I was extravagant, that I worked too hard to put everything I made on my back. We quarrelled, for it got on my nerves to have him taking it for granted that we would be married that summer. Now that Duke Harlan was coming I had less and less use for Harry. He seemed more tame and uninteresting than ever. "I don't see what business it is of yours, Harry Clemons, what I do with my own money."

I could see how I had hurt him. Later when I passed his room the door was open and I saw him inside polishing up his old army pistol, one of his favorite pastimes. I don't know why, but that time it sort of gave me the creeps. Harry was so sure I would marry him, I wondered what he would say if I were ever to find someone else I liked better.

At last the great day came, the day of days, the day which changed my whole life. I saw Duke Harlan. As a rule I worked in the first balcony; but I managed to slip down to the main floor just before he made his entrance on the stage. I went into a box as near the footlights as I could get. I didn't care whether it cost me my job or not. I was too thrilled, too wild with happiness. And then I saw him. He was even more wonderful than I had dreamed he could be.

How can I describe the feelings that rushed over me at the sound of his deep pleasant voice? When I saw him bow, heard the applause of that immense crowd, a lump came into my throat that choked me. Tears blurred my sight of him and I brushed them aside so as not to miss one second of his glorious presence. Probably in that whole audience I was the only one who did not clap or cheer. I stood perfectly still, rigid almost, trying to absorb his every gesture, his every impression, each tone and shade of meaning. He was so much handsomer, more fascinating than on the screen. His pictures did not do him justice. His hair was a dark, chestnut brown, his eyes deep set and a gray blue, his skin sun tanned and ruddy. How could the films show that, and though I had read innumerable articles describing him, I seemed to see him just as if I had never heard anything about him before.

I must manage to get closer to him, look more deeply into those magnetic eyes that drew me with a force beyond my control. Crazy, you must think me! Perhaps I was. Perhaps love after all is a kind of frenzy of the senses, an upheaval of the soul. I felt desperate, reckless. I wanted to jump down on to the stage and fling myself at his feet. Anything to capture his attention even if only for a little while.

A little while. Yes, that was all I could hope for or expect. Like a king stooping to smile on a beggar maid; but I felt that if I could not win a smile, given just to me, I would die of a disappointment too intense to be borne.

BUT how could I hope to attract the notice of a man like Duke Harlan, when there were dozens, no, hundreds of other women all wanting the same thing? Rich, beautiful women, with so much to offer. What chance had I, an usher in a movie house? But I must think of some plan. He was to be at the Rex for two weeks. Two weeks in which to feast my heart and soul, to drink at this fountain of my happiness. Two weeks in which to accomplish the almost impossible.

As Harry had said, that evening of his first appearance there was a mob waiting at the stage door to see him come out. Ninety percent women, of course, and the other ten percent were police holding them back. There was something disgust-



"I'm almost sorry I met you," Duke said. "I guess it wasn't a good day for you when you got into my car last night."

ing to me in all these girls parading their emotions so cheaply.

On the third night Harry Clemons said to me, "My brother, Paul, says Duke Harlan has had to have a fake car planted outside the theater to trick those nutty dames. Yesterday one of them tried to snatch his handkerchief. They tore the buttons off his coat and smashed his hat and busted his cane. No wonder Harlan hasn't much use or respect for women. Now he's putting a good one over on them. They'll be watching his limousine at the stage door, while he's going to slip out front and pick up another car around on the corner of Sixth Avenue. Paul's driving him. He thinks it's a wow of a joke on those skirts."

I listened intently, my heart beating fast. I had met Harry's brother Paul. He had been up to our [Continued on page 112]



I turned unable to believe my ears, but they had not deceived me, Schuyler Briggs was standing there in the white sand, his arms opening as he called me. We moved slowly toward each other. Oh, so slowly, as if we were only phantoms that would fade at a touch. "Schuyler, why did you come?" I asked. I knew the answer, but I wanted him to tell me why with his own voice.

The Astonishing Outcome of My Mad Romance in Gay Miami



Only
A
Cigarette Girl

IN MY quest for romance I left a comfortable home and became a cigarette girl. Thus I met the two rich men who fell in love with me and incurred the hatred of a beautiful woman. When I heard that my brother, Pedro, knew of my escapade on Surf Island and was out to kill me, I hurried to Schuyler Briggs and begged him to take me away. As we ran out of the hotel I saw my brother's partner.

Until that terrified moment when I caught sight of Edwardo Gomez through the back window of the taxi I thought my brother Pedro had been given the slip. But, there was no doubt from the shouting and waving of Pedro's fishing partner that I had been unsuccessful in my attempt to rush with Schuyler Briggs to the yacht Desmonda undetected. Edwardo, who must have been stationed on the sidewalk as a lookout, would call Pedro. They would pursue us to Cocoplum Pier. Schuyler Briggs would learn what I was so anxious for him not to know. He would hear Pedro denounce me as the girl in man's clothes that had been taken off Surf Island with

Wainwright by a fishing smack that morning. He might believe what the gossips believed. I would be ruined in his eyes. Our dream of romance together would be cruelly smashed!

I looked furtively out of the corner of my eyes at Schuyler, overwhelmed by the fearful knowledge that I was between the devil and the deep blue sea. He had been mystified by my request to dash from the hotel to the yacht after Sam, the bell captain, had told me that my brother was in the Conquistador looking for me with murder in his eyes and the baffled expression was still on Schuyler's face. I regarded it as a good omen. Schuyler had neither heard nor seen Edwardo Gomez.

If only I dared ask him to make the driver speed! It was possible, of course, to elude Pedro if we went like the wind. A small boat from the Desmonda was waiting at Cocoplum Pier. A few minutes gained meant we could shove off and board the yacht without being caught, but I was afraid

to ask Schuyler to order the chauffeur to speed I did not want him to realize there was danger of pursuit by my brother. He would certainly demand an explanation, and that would be ruinous.

Once more I turned my head from the man at my side and shot an apprehensive glance through the back window. Traffic was heavy behind us, and I could not make out anything clearly until I saw two men running down the steps of the Conquistador toward a cab. One, the shorter of the two was Gomez, the other was Pedro. My heart was in my mouth, as I saw them enter the cab. Pedro, reckless, impulsive, and inflamed by his violent temper would order his driver to go at break-neck speed to overtake us.

In that moment of despair I felt as if I were being beaten and crushed at every turn of Life's road. For I had just realized what Schuyler Briggs meant in my life. He was the man around whom I had spun a dream of love.

"Oh! Blessed Mother in Heaven. Pedro must not catch me," I prayed in tortured silence. "He must not now cheat me of the happiness I want. I could not live if Schuyler should turn against me. My heart would break. All the years to come would be empty. Oh! my Blessed Mother, do not let him catch me. Do not break Nunciata's heart!"

I shall always believe that what happened the next moment was the Blessed Mother's way of answering me. The afternoon air seemed suddenly rent by screeching and wailing sirens, and the clang of excited bells.

Schuyler and I both looked behind us at the same time. We saw fire engines swerve out of the street directly north of the Conquistador, and rush southward past the great hotel. But, I saw and realized more than this. All traffic behind us was suddenly shut off. I murmured a little prayer of thanks, and the pressure of an iron hand seemed to magically lift from my heart.

Five blocks with no sign of any cab pursuing us. The driver put on speed of his own inclination. The Pier was reached before we knew it. Without a word Schuyler led me to a motor boat and helped me aboard, then gave orders to take us to the Desmonda.

I kept watching the Pier, and trying to suppress the fear that Pedro might arrive on the dock any moment. But we were in the lee of the long white yacht without my fears coming true. I went up the ladder uncertainly, for I suddenly remembered that although Pedro had been apparently eluded the greatest danger of all still stalked me.

Schuyler had called Mrs. Vanderpool, the woman who had started all the gossip about Wainwright and myself on Surf Island, and asked her to chaperone the yachting cruise. I



"You keep my sister on Surf Island. I'll kill you," said Pedro, his hand flashing to his knife, a look of murder in his blazing eyes. I sprang between them . . .

had never allowed him to finish the conversation with her because I knew she must not chaperone the party. The moment she saw me my goose would be cooked.

"But how am I to stop him from sending Mrs. Vanderpool a wireless now? What kind of an excuse do I dare give to keep her away? And, it's so late, he'll insist he can't get anyone else? What shall I do?" I asked myself.

Until we reached the deck Schuyler had maintained a silence almost as baffling as the expression worn on his face. "Now, that we've carried out your wish to rush right aboard, I suppose you'll tell me why we did it. Not that I wasn't as anxious as possible to get aboard with you, Nunciata, but the way it came about was rather abrupt and mystifying, to say the least. Will you tell me why?" he asked.

I looked at him helplessly for a moment. Then I put my arms around his shoulders: "Schuyler, dear, if you'll just give me a few moments I'll try to explain." I was fencing for a chance to decide upon what I must tell him.

He looked at me, and suddenly seemed to realize that I was on the verge of breaking down. Tenderness brimmed his blue eyes. He drew me gently to him. "I'll come back



later when you've pulled yourself together," he said, and kissed me. We clung together for a few moments, and I realized anew how cold and empty life would be without Schuyler's strong arms to hold me. I would have tried to tell him then if he had not insisted upon leaving me to myself a few minutes.

I decided during those few minutes that I would make a clean breast of everything. I was unsophisticated enough and

I loved him enough, to convince myself that he would believe me. "Surely, if he really loves me, he'll take my word for all that's happened," I thought.

I began bravely when he returned and put his arms around me. "Schuyler, I'm going to tell you. . ." My tongue seemed suddenly twisted in my throat by the sound of a boat coming alongside the Desmonda —a bumping sound that was soon smothered by voices. Pedro and Gomez!

I drew away from Schuyler, trembling from head to foot, and forced myself to hear above the roaring in my ears:

"You're damn sure this is the boat Gomez?"

"Si, si, it is! The man on the pier makes no mistake. He saw them come aboard. She came with the man of this morning. I'm sure. He's big, tall fellow. A gun would be better than your knife for his kind."

"Carraho!" swore Pedro. "A knife is better. I want him to feel my knife. Here, I'll go aboard. You make away in the launch. I keep the row-boat."

"He's a strong fellow. Be careful," warned Edwardo Gomez.

Petrified with fear, I heard steps on the stairs. . . . brother Pedro going aboard! Knowing I must get to him first, I tried to hold Schuyler but he eluded me, and broke into a run. I followed him to the deck. I heard Pedro's voice violent and ugly. And Schuyler Briggs's voice, shocked and bewildered. My brother's words stopped me in my tracks.

"So, you're the rich fellow who gets my sister kicked out of home, who takes her to Surf Island and keeps her all night, then tries to steal her away on this boat. I'll kill you!"

"I don't know what you're talking about!"

"Bah! Of course you don't. You're afraid to know. But I know everything! A fishing smack has to take you and my sister off Surf Island after you spend all the night there together. You think I'm a damn fool? You think because you got money, and a swell name you get away with Nunciata that way? Por Dios! I'll knife you."

I rushed out on deck. Pedro's hand was upon the long knife at his waist. Schuyler faced my brother unflinchingly although his face was sheet white.

"Pedro!" I cried, "how dare you come like this. You do not know what you're—"

"I know this man here keeps you alone on Surf Island all night, and I know he's to marry you or P—"

"What does he mean by saying I kept you on Surf Island all night?" interrupted Schuyler, his [Continued on page 116]

What

Is

The

Danger Line?

By **MARThA MADISON**
Who Understands Boys and Girls

VALERIE. I can close my eyes and see her sitting in her big chair, legs crossed. There's a cigarette in one hand. Awfully pretty hands, too, with long nails that are very pink and very shiny.

Val has a cute little figure and a cupid's bow mouth, the color of crushed strawberries. Her eyelashes are long and dark and they caress her cheeks like graceful fronds (trained that way by the persistent use of mascara.)

Over on her dressing table is the picture of a good looking chap with dark hair, slicked down in true sheik fashion. His name is Dave. He has laughing eyes and a nice mouth and chin. Dave is Valerie's boy friend, and Val is beginning to wonder if he's worth all the fuss and worry.

Valerie uses orange note paper with a black and gold band running around the border. She writes in a bold, dashing hand; wastes no words on flowery composition but comes straight to the point:

"Where should a girl draw the line when it comes to petting? What and why is the danger line, Mrs. Madison? It's awfully hard to know."

"I have several boy friends, but I'm fondest of Dave: we will probably get married some day. Dave's an awfully sweet kid and he's good to me and shows me a good time; I guess you'd say I'm quite crazy about him, but I pet with all the boys."

"I live with another girl in a one-room and kitchenette apartment. We have day beds and it's fixed up like a sitting-room because it is the only place we have to entertain our friends. Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday nights are mine and Flo goes out. The other nights are hers and then I go out; so in that way we have plenty of privacy. Sometimes I wish we didn't have so much!"

"I am a good girl, Mrs. Madison, and Dave and the other boys know it, and yet they don't act that way. My mother always said that a man who would ruin a girl is the lowest type of cad; but these friends of mine are the nicest kind of boys. They live home and have mothers and sisters and every-

thing to keep them good, but if I'd let them, they would go the limit.

"I'm no different from any other girl; Flo is up against the same thing with her man, only Flo handles him all right because she's got an awful temper and a quick tongue. But I'm not made that way. I love Dave and it's awfully hard to be nasty to him. And I don't trust myself. When Dave and I pet, nothing else matters very much."

"So I want to draw a very definite line and tell Dave he must stop this side of it, but where is that line, Mrs. Madison? And why is it dangerous?"

VALERIE." First, Val, let's get one thing straight, so we will understand each other. I am not going to preach morality to you or anyone else; there are others who can do that. I know perfectly well that if I were to say, "Petting cheapens a girl, Val, and she loses the man's respect," you would turn away in disgust, because I'd be handing you the same old line. Petting doesn't cheapen a girl and it doesn't lose the man's respect unless she, herself, is cheap and has no self-respect.

So this isn't going to be a sermon against petting. At the moment I am not so much concerned with petting as what lies back of it, the thing that makes you say to yourself, "I'll bet that boy knows his onions!" It's the same thing that makes you say to me, "When Dave and I pet, nothing else matters very much." That thing, Val, is mate-hunger. Some people call it love, some infatuation, some romance, but it's plain every day hungering for a mate, and it's just as driving and powerful a force as food-hunger. Every normal boy and girl, man and



I can close my eyes and see Valerie sitting in her big chair, legs crossed, a cigarette in one hand, while she writes to me. At times she stops to stare at the picture of the dear boy whom she loves.



I am sitting in my study reading Valerie's letter and this article is the answer I wrote to her. I love to get your letters and write to you dear people. Please, please, let me hear from all of you. I do so want to help you.

woman, is helpless before it because it is so strong.

It's this way: If you don't eat, you die; if you don't mate, the race dies; and it's nature's business to see that neither of those things happens. And that's why people fall in love, Val; that's why they get married, and that's why you like to pet with Dave. So you see, the desire to pet is perfectly natural and necessary.

But every kiss is charged with dynamite!

Here's where the rub comes in. When Nature gave us that dominating hunger to mate, she did not give us a means of controlling it until safe within the sanctity of marriage. Nature knows nothing of marriage; marriage is a man-made law.

I'm not trying to put over any high-falutin ideas of my own on you, Val. I've got proof. Science will back me up. Listen to this: It has been proved that an animal will face the same danger for a mate as it will for food. The hungry animal is placed in one cage and the food in another. Between the two runs an electrically charged plate. The animal must cross that plate to get to the food. As he gets nearer the food, the electric shocks become more severe, but nothing short of electrocution will keep the animal from the food. The same thing was done to test its mate-hunger; a female animal was placed in the other cage instead of food. The result was the same.

"But we aren't animals," you shout. "We're civilized." All you've got to do, Val, is to read up on mob psychology to see how thin our veneer of civilization is; how animal-like we really are. How civilized are the men and women you ride with in the subway when there's a collision or short circuit? What has happened to civilization when a band of men open up a jail and yank out a prisoner and string him up to a tree?

It's all very well for you to say, "Well, anyway, I am civilized, and when a boy gets fresh with me I know how to put him

in his place!" Maybe. But suppose this mate-hunger hits you full force one of these beautiful nights when you and Dave are "just petting"? Suppose your head flies off and soars up among the clouds somewhere, and you cry, "Nothing matters!" instead of "Nothing matters very much," as you do now? Just because you have been able to control the situation so far doesn't mean that you always will.

Every time you kiss Dave you are playing with fire, and one of these days that fire is going to burn. That's what I want to keep you from, Val.

You ask me: "Where should a girl draw the line and why?" I've told you why. Now I'll tell you where:

Much depends on the girl, where and how she lives and whether she is of an emotional temperament. It's only a step from a [Continued on page 92]

MARTHA MADISON'S Monthly Prize Contest

Did you ever come near crossing from the right to the wrong side? What stopped you? How did you know when to stop?

Is there any girl who hasn't asked herself these questions and are there any absolutely safe and final answers?

Write Martha Madison and tell her what your experience with "The Danger Line" has been.

For the best letter, based on your experience with "The Danger Line," Martha Madison will give a prize of \$5; for the second best \$3; for the third best, \$2 and \$1 for each of the next five best. Martha Madison will act as judge. No letter will be returned. Contest closes April 30, 1927.

A Story of a Repentance That Came Too Late



White Studio

I WOULD have given all the remaining years of my life for this to be an evil dream! But it was no dream. My "last great adventure" meant the end of happiness. It had lost me a husband and the peace that comes of marrying a good man. My visit to The Folly was folly indeed.

My One Last Fling

LET those women who enjoy a certain type of adventure live through with me my last adventure. My name is Eva Bude, my age is thirty-three and I am a widow. I am a beautiful woman, a clever woman, and till a comparatively short time ago I should have said a very lucky woman. I loved my work—that of Paris buyer for a big London firm of wholesale dressmakers—and it was one of my journeys back from France that started my last adventure.

I had just settled myself in the reserved compartment of the train from Dover to London when the railway carriage door was flung open and a man sprang up the steps.

"Will you forgive my intrusion?" he said, in a full, caressing voice. "The train is absolutely full! I can't find a seat."

More, it was already in motion, and a moment later my unbidden guest had come over to my side of the carriage and, sitting down opposite to me, he had said something which at once amused, thrilled, and—yes, allured me. This was, "You mustn't mind my saying you are just the loveliest woman I have ever seen!"

There came a time when I made a serious attempt to reconstruct in my mind everything that had happened on what became so retrospectively memorable a journey. Why had I allowed an unknown man to share my solitude? And, above all, why had I so soon "made friends" with him? Was it because I had just spent a week among foreigners who, though they showed me every courtesy, yet regarded me, as Frenchmen are apt to regard a woman who works, in an entirely impersonal fashion? That, no doubt, had been one reason, the other lay deep in the roots of my peculiar temperament and nature. The long level glance which my fellow traveller, as he leaped up into the railway carriage, had cast at me, had had in it that mysterious, beckoning appeal for which I was, half-consciously, always watching, and to which I was almost always prepared to grant a measure of response in those days that now seem so long ago although their shadow still hangs over me.

How can I describe the man—his name was James Malton—who was to play so critical a part in my life? He was tall, dark, full of a kind of magnetic vigor, and his eyes held me.

Given what we were both like, it was perhaps not so very strange, after all, that long before we reached our journey's end each knew concerning the other, quite as much as was necessary to a good understanding. But whereas I, poor fool that I was, believed I knew everything that was worth the knowing, concerning my attractive companion, all he had learned about me was that I was a childless widow. Neither of us had touched on the sordid question of finance. That I was well off must have become at once apparent to Malton, for I was admirably dressed, in the sort of clothes that he knew too much about women not to know must cost a great deal of money. My string of pearls was unobtrusive, and the only other jewel I ever wear is a flat flawless emerald ring.

I remember that he told me he had just sold his share in a house-agent's business, and that he owned an attractive little property not far from Dover, and all this was true.

I refused to give him my address but I did at last consent to give him my telegraphic address of "Bukalo, Frampton-on-Thames," this because he had asked me to dinner the next Tuesday night at the Savoy Hotel, and I naturally wanted him to let me know if for any reason that plan fell through.

There are more respectable people in the world than people who are not respectable suppose. On the other hand there are infinitely more lawless men and women in the world than the law-abiding folk would believe, even were the proverbial angel to come and tell them so. I, Eva Bude, was only ashamed of certain secret phases of my life because of a public opinion which I at once feared and despised. Only later did I learn that my new friend had very early in life joined the herd of human rogue elephants.

I remembered how that man's personality haunted me, how long it seemed till we met again. But I had had one pleasant interlude, the visit of my only real woman friend.

We had known each other from childhood, and though circumstances had parted us comparatively early in life we had always kept in touch. Now we were both widowed, but Agnes Horsham is poor, and she has four children, so she is compelled to live with her mother-in-law in the Channel Islands. Being in London for the first time for years, she came to spend one of her few precious hours with me, Eva Bude, in my luxurious cottage at Frampton-on-Thames.

How that peaceful hour comes back to me! After a delicious little dinner we were sitting in my rose-scented garden, and both in the mood for confidences, indeed I had just told Agnes what she had thought to be an astounding fact about myself and my way of life.

"If I did that," she said slowly. "I should feel such a hypocrite—"

"You would feel like a hypocrite? Why that? I do a man's work, I make a man's income, and I choose to lead a man's life. It's a rotten convention which forces a woman to be what is called 'good,' while giving every kind of license to men!" I exclaimed.

"And does no one ever suspect, Eva?"

Poor Agnes! As a girl she had been so attractive, but now she looked middle-aged, though she was only thirty-four. Her thin, pale face wore an eager excited, and yes, rather a shamed, expression, as she waited for my answer.

"No one has ever suspected, and no one will suspect—you see I don't lead a double life, I lead a triple life! First comes my working life, and I allow nothing to interfere with that. As you know, I go sometimes, once or twice a month to Paris."

A look of understanding flashed into Agnes's face. "Oh, Paris!" she exclaimed.

I shook my head impatiently. "When I'm in Paris I'm much

too busy to think of anything but my work. French people, as a matter of fact, are awfully prudish—why I very seldom even lunch or dine out with a man when I'm there, yet, I'm known in every one of the big luxury trades in France, as 'la belle Madame Bude,' and I laughed gaily.

"I don't wonder at that," said Agnes Horsham sincerely. "But Eva? Tell me about your other two lives—"

"Well, there's my life down here! Though I'm a good deal away, I've kept up my tennis, and become quite keen on golf!"

"And now—now about your third life?"

"There isn't much to tell, my dear! As you know, my work takes me about a good deal, and now and again, off and on, I meet a man, in whom I feel—oh it's so difficult to explain!—a sort of romantic interest. I'm careful. I seldom make a mistake. And of course there's plenty of choice."

Agnes gazed at me bewildered. "D'you mean that there are a lot of men always going about looking for—for an adventure?" she asked incredulously.

I LAUGHED aloud—how could I help it?—a ringing laugh of amusement and kindly contempt. "What sort of life can you have led, my poor dear, not to have found that out! Still I confess—" I hesitated, and Agnes looked at me in the now deepening twilight with keen curiosity.

"I confess," I repeated, "that I do like a touch of real romance; I mean I should hate anything sordid."

Agnes said slowly—"You're a brave woman, Eva. I should be so horribly afraid of the possible consequences."

Then when she saw a grin zig-zag across my face she cried: "You don't understand what I mean! What I should be afraid of, were I you, would be that when the affair is over the man wouldn't give me up!"

"My dear Agnes! Surely you don't think I let my temporary hero know anything about me! It doesn't often happen that I even let him know my name! No, no—I always play fair. My partner in the game is told, very early in our friendship that he will very soon have to say bye-bye—"

"I see," said Agnes, under her breath.

"And I'll tell you something else which may surprise you, my dear. I've now made up my mind to give up—well, Romance with a big R."

"You have?"

"Yes—one more little adventure, and then I settle down to absolute respectability."

"Does that mean that you're thinking of marrying the kind of man who doesn't even know of the sort of thing we've been talking about?"

"Clever girl! Perhaps it does. And you've guessed that if I do marry again, I'll marry a good man!"

"Eva! You are a queer woman."

"Am I?" I can hear my mocking tone. "Don't reformed rakes always try and marry good, simple girls?"

"Do tell me about him? I know you've some one in your mind!"

"I have in a way. He's rich, and good-looking too, but what I like about him, my dear, is that he's a good man! If I do marry him, I'll make him a thoroughly good wife. However, it's almost indecent to talk about that, as I'm on the eve of having my last little fling!"

A WEEK later I had started on my last adventure! That man, of whom I knew practically nothing, had persuaded me to go off just for a tiny jaunt to his lonely house near the sea. Every moment of our long, delicious automobile journey pulses into life as I write.

It was a hot July day, and the London we had left three hours before—for I hate motoring too fast—had been like a furnace.



My companion in adventure was in exultantly high spirits. Though his dark, handsome face bore the marks of strain, and his bright brown eyes signs of sleeplessness, he looked as if, at last, life had given him what he had been seeking for, always. He had confessed to me that he had only three days more of England left, but they would be perfect days, spent not only with what he was kind enough to describe as the most physically perfect, but also the most alluring, woman, it had ever been his luck to meet.

I can hear his deep caressing voice murmuring, "Darling! darling, darling!"

And I, too, was in an exultant mood, determined to enjoy every halcyon moment of my last journey into the kingdom of illicit romance. This man, Jim Malton, had laid a strange potent spell, if not on my heart, then on my senses, during our brief acquaintance. In a way I was glad he was leaving England for ever . . .



There was certainly someone moving about in the cellar. It was very dark down there but, treading cautiously, I made my way down the stairs. "Who's there?" I called out boldly.

"We shall be there in about ten minutes from now, sweetheart. You won't mind there being nobody to wait on you?" In a low, ardent voice, he added: "I'll wait on you, darling!"

As for me I answered merrily "I'm not afraid of housework, Jim; and though I say it, I'm a really good cook!"

"It's far too hot for cooking. Besides I've got in there everything we're likely to want," and his eyes rested contentedly on the huge hamper which stood on the two seats.

"**T**HAT'S 'The Folly,'" he said suddenly.

Halfway up the bare, almost cliff-like hill to our left, the shimmering blue sea to our right, stood a curious-looking white house in an oasis of greenery.

Then he called out to the chauffeur: "It's the first turn to the left, but you'll have to be somewhat careful, for it's only a rough track, as well as very steep."

The man, who had been promised a big tip, called back

cheerily, "I'll manage all right, sir."

My eyes traveled slowly over the wide expanse of short turfed down which lay below the little property for which we were bound.

"What a strange, lonely place to choose for a house!" I exclaimed. And then, "It must have cost a tremendous lot of money to build it up

there, even in the good old days before the war. It doesn't look a bit English."

"As a matter of fact you've hit the bull's eye! 'The Folly' is an exact copy of an Italian villa. It was built about fifty years ago, by the father of the man who owns it."

"I thought you said it belonged to you," I said quickly. The discrepancy seemed odd.

"Well, it's been practically mine for the last ten years, for the owner lives in Italy. Now and again we've managed"—he corrected himself quickly—"I've managed to get it let, but it's far too lonely to please the sort of people who generally want a house by the seaside."

Still, I noticed the "we."

A sudden bend in the lane brought us just below the villa, and I saw that the actual building was of white stone, the terrace was of marble, supported by wide substantial brick arches. Through the arches could be seen the windows of what was apparently the ground floor of this unusual-looking dwelling.

"It must be a very dark basement," I said musingly.

"Far too dark to be of any use," Malton said quickly. Then more slowly he added: "The last people who were here were American, and they insisted on having what they called a kitchenette made out of a small room beyond the dining room. They locked every door leading to the basement and I've not been down there since they left. There's a good little oil stove in the kitchenette—quite good enough for any cooking we're likely to want to do." He let his voice drop. "We'll live on

bread and cheese and kisses," he whispered.

Ah me! Again and again during those three days I told myself that till this, my last secret adventure, I had never known what life in its perfection could be. We seemed—I and Jim Malton, to be the perfect complement the one of the other. Every waking hour brought some new delightful proof of how well we were attuned. I was completely under his spell; he held me enthralled.

Early on our last morning, just after sunrise, I awoke to see my lover bending over me. His face was blanched, and I felt a thrill of terror. "What's the matter?" I exclaimed.

"DON'T you hear a noise downstairs?" he whispered affrightedly, and he gripped my arm with such force that I bore the mark for days.

I listened. "No, I hear nothing."

"Listen!"

And then I did hear something—curious muffled sounds coming up from the hanging gardens below.

"It's only some animal, a sheep probably," I murmured. "I think it's got into that queer tin garden-room near the back door," and I saw an expression of intense relief sweep over Jim Malton's haggard face.

"Perhaps it is a sheep," he whispered back.

But all at once there came the sounds of a door opening and shutting.

"You're right Jim! Someone has gone into the basement," I exclaimed. "But how can they have got in there, it's all shut up?"

And then I saw that his face was dusky now, and as if convulsed with fear. I felt a little amused, God help me! and yes, a little disgusted too.

"Don't look like that! It may be a tramp, or a gipsy, who thinks the house empty. In any case I'll go down and see who it is," I added. "I am not afraid!"

I had leaped out of bed, and I was putting on my becoming turquoise-blue kimono. Malton was staring at me, obviously unmanned. "Perhaps it is a hawker."

He was sitting crouched upon the low wide bed. "Somehow I don't like your going downstairs all by yourself, darling. Yet—yet I don't feel I can go down there."

THE door we've never opened in the dining room leads to the basement I suppose? Where's the key?"

To my surprise he muttered, "I've got it here, somewhere," and then he got up and rummaged in his waistcoat pocket and produced a rusty key. I snatched the key from his nerveless hand and ran down to the dining room. There I put the key in the door and turning it found that the door opened straight on a dark staircase. Treading cautiously I made my way down, down, till I reached the large disused kitchen. What a queer place! It was very dark there, though a little fresh morning light filtered through the window, between the broad arches. Standing still, I listened, intently.

Yes, there was certainly someone moving about in what had once probably been the servants' hall.

"Who's there?" I called out boldly.

The cobwebbed door between the two rooms swung open,



My visitor leaned toward me saying slowly, "I have come on what you. I belong to the Criminal Investigation

and a small, still boyish-looking man advanced towards me, while a refined voice exclaimed—"I'm awfully sorry, madam, to have disturbed you! I haven't had any food since yesterday morning, so I'm terribly hungry. Don't be frightened—I'm not a burglar, though I fear I look like one."

"How did you get in here?" I asked.

And then, in the pale morning light filtering in through the window panes, I saw that the tramp smiled.

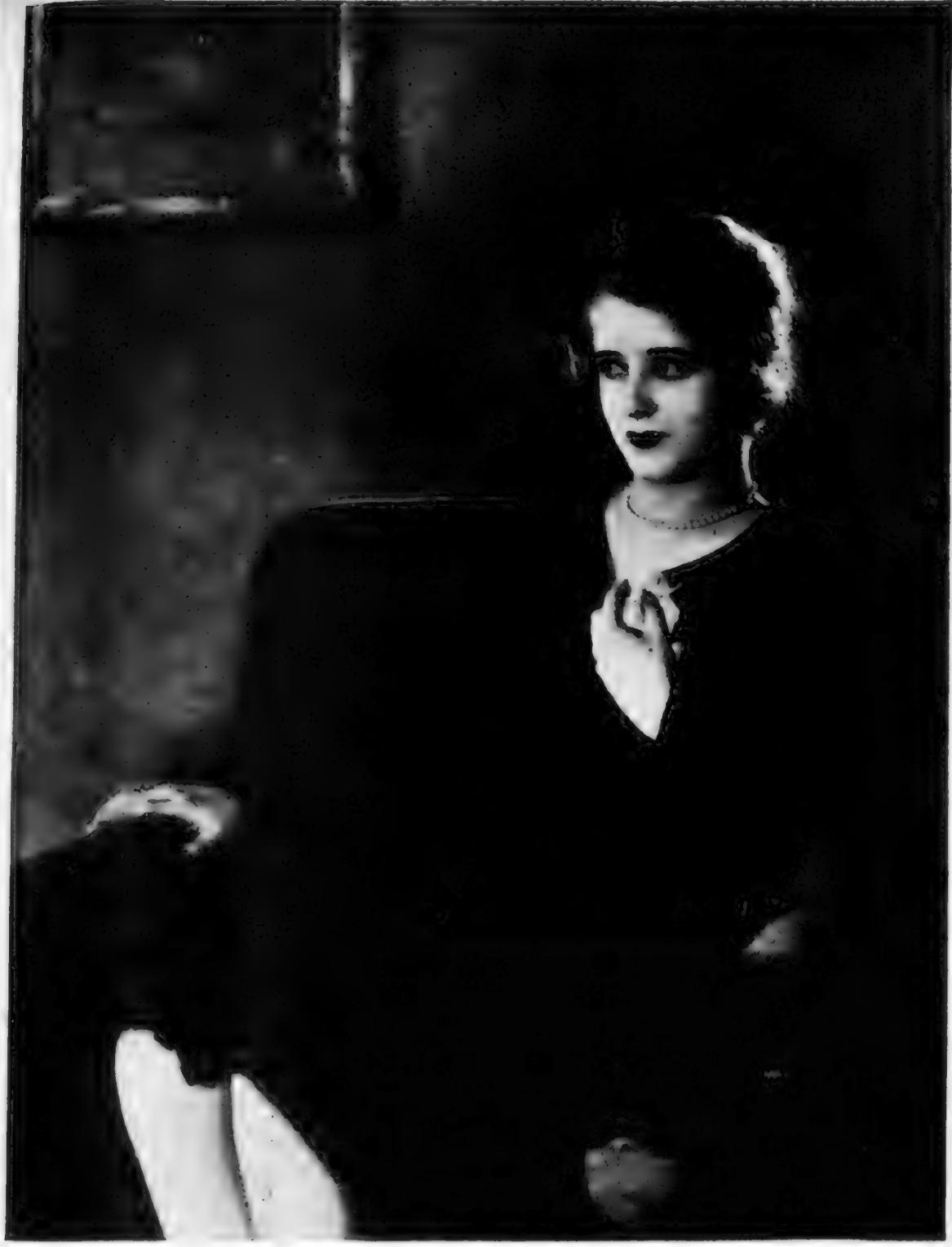
"I went into that queer little tin room you've got in the garden," he answered. "And behind the door there I found a bunch of rusty keys. I couldn't help suspecting that one of them would fit the back door to this house—and it did!"

"I see."

I felt relieved—no harm in this poor little chap! And then I couldn't help saying, "You do look bad! If you'll wait here a minute, I'll go upstairs and get you something to eat—and to drink too."

He said gratefully—"You are kind."

For a moment I thought of asking him to come up with me; I would have done so, had I been alone in the house, for I am very fearless. But the thought of Malton stopped me—not that I wanted to think just then of Malton, for his attack of



I am afraid is unpleasant business. I think it best to be frank with Department of Scotland Yard".

nerves had shocked me. But I had become aware, during our short acquaintance, that the hero of this, my last adventure, was a highly sensitive and nervous man, in spite of his air of virile strength.

I ran quickly up the dark flight of stairs, and then opening the door I came right on Jim Malton. He was standing there, his face grey and drawn.

"It's all right!" I exclaimed, "Only a hungry tramp. I'm giving him a bit of meat and bread and butter. He'll be gone in a few minutes!"

I WENT down into the quaint kitchenette where I had spent happy moments during the last three days doing odd little bits of cooking, mostly of the fresh egg variety; there I put some meat, a generous hunk of bread, and some butter on a tray.

Once more I made my way down the somber steep stairway to the basement, and turning again into the dark kitchen I put down the tray on the table near the window. I confess to being woman enough to feel flattered at my unbidden guest's look of mingled gratitude and admiration.

As he fell to, ravenously, I noticed that his hands were white, and that he used his knife and fork like a cultured man.

"What brought you to this pass?" I asked. "What sort of work is it that you can do?"

He told me that he had been a medical student in his first term at the outbreak of the war and that he had at once joined up. Twice he had been badly wounded, and after the Armistice he had foolishly commuted his pension. His physical condition made it out of the question for him to study medicine now, even had he the means to do so. "There's an old friend of my father's living in Dover," he concluded, "I think he may help me out."

At last he got up. "You have been a sport!" he exclaimed. "The more so since I'm afraid I gave you a fright."

"The basement hasn't been used for ever so long," I said lightly. "We have a tiny kitchen upstairs."

He gave me a quick, rather curious look. "Someone's been cooking lately down here," he said, "and I think some food must have gone bad in the larder. There's a nasty smell in the next room. Would you like me to clean out the place for you?"

"Oh, no; I expect it's only a dead rat!"

I held out my hand. "Good-by, and good-luck!"

"The same to you," he said cordially, then turning, limped across the wide kitchen.

"You'll shut the outer door—and put the keys back where you found them?" I called out, just as he disappeared through the door.

I found Jim had cooked breakfast, but he looked strangely changed, so unlike his caressing, jovial self.

"I can't make out," he said uneasily, "how the chap got in?" But when I had told him, he struck his right hand on the table. "How could I have been such a

fool!" he exclaimed. "But I haven't thought of that bunch of keys since—well—" he hesitated a moment, "the last tenants left. They must have been left there by a man who used to come in to air the place and look after the garden."

I WENT upstairs and when I came down dressed Jim was in none of the living rooms, and I wondered where he could be. Then, all at once, I saw him on the terrace, a bunch of rusty keys in his hand. He looked moody, preoccupied, troubled; and I, too, felt suddenly heavy-hearted. "Our last morning," I murmured, and going out of the tiny window I laid my head on his breast. But he pushed me from him. "I can't make any of these keys fit the back door," he said abruptly. "I've tried them all, over and over again."

I felt hurt, as well as very much surprised.

"I'm certain I could make it work. Give me a little of that salad oil; it will be all right once I've oiled the rust off it."

His face cleared as he watched me rub up a key he had detached from the ring. Off he went again. But soon he came back. "No! It won't work. You don't think that young chap could have taken the right key off the ring and gone off with it, do you? He might." [Continued on page 90]



THIS FUNNY WORLD

AS SEEN BY ALECK SMART



TAS
KEY

WE GOT the raise! Remember we hinted that when the letters that came to Aleck Smart got up in the four figures, the Editor of this great family journal would give us a boost in our pay check. You came through like a Kansas cyclone. But don't fail us now. The Editor's a touchy bird and if you dropped off he'd probably stick a knife into our increased pittance. We count on you to stand by us—to your wife's last relation. Enter Aleck Smart's contests. Win a prize. But write to Aleck—whatever's on your mind.

As You Were



The hair-dressers are always taking the joy out of life. They're saying again that you girls are letting your hair grow and that the bob, shingle, or what-have-you is going out of style. Is it true girls? Tell Aleck Smart it ain't so. We like you as you are. But on the other hand we liked you as you were—and no doubt we will like you as you will be, what ever that will be, will be—forever and forever. Amen.

What a Stenog Should Say:

You stenogs simply ate up the chance to say—with perfect safety—what you have long wanted to say to the smiling, date-suggesting boss who pulls the gag about, "Would the boy friend object?" Here's the first prize winner and four of the others, at one berry each. Another dollar winner was Jean M. Dolley, Sierraville, Calif., who said it in verse too long for publishing in this column.

"Would your boy friend object if to dinner and show
"Me little time I had take"
She did a come over her head that gag to me
I didn't even raise the old take
I'd never quite get in a race with a smile,
(A ter her come over)
"I really don't know what my boy friend might say.—
But I sure couldn't dish him such dirt."
Noma M. Hacker, Chicago, Ill.

Certainly not. Bring your wife along and there will be four of us.
N. T. Parr, Fordyce, Ark.

Not a bit. We're saving up to get married and he appreciates anything that saves him expense.
Katherine Hinkle, Youngstown, Ohio.

You're darned right he'd object and so would you after he'd finished his trusty right swat.
Mary Frances Barbes, Elkins, West Va.

Why, no, Mr. Smith. I should be pleased to meet Mrs. Smith and no doubt she would like to see what your stenographer looks like.—M. Little, San Francisco, Calif.

Smart Set Knows Its Onions

*Some women tell and some there are who don't;
Some say they will—but in a pinch, they won't.
My wife, she told. But once, how well I know!
She never murmured of her latest beau.
I couldn't stand for that banana oil
And grew suspicious of my darling goil.
(See The Time She Didn't Tell.)
I screamed a prayer—or maybe just a curse.
The White North stopped to listen, wanting worse.
The half-breed raised his gun—the jig was up.
But no, a savior came—a husky pup.
(See Hunted Lovers.)*

Cash for Wise-Cracks

Here's another chance to wise-crack. What would you say to the bright and smiling stranger who uses the old one: "Let me see. Haven't I met you before?" Aleck Smart will pay one dollar for each of the ten best answers. Contest closes April 30, 1927. We're the judge. No letters returned.

*When a flapper winks at a middle aged man in a limousine it's usually with a palace aforethought!
It's always fare weather when good fellows and gold-diggers get together!*

Henry A. Courtney, Atlanta.

March's Limerick Winners

Anne Sperry, Springfield Center, N. Y., stopped the show in the March Limerick Contest and picked off the first prize with this last line:

"And traditions were sent all askewedo."

Second prize went to P. D. Ingals, of San Francisco, Calif., and a one dollar bill went to each of the following: Ruth F. Brewer, Norwich, Conn.; Evelyn Jameyson, Kansas City, Mo.; Mrs. F. M. Harvey, Terre Haute, Ind.; Alice Hull, Atlanta, Ga.; Edna Retzman, Chicago, Ill.

Puzzle Fans, Attention!

How did you get along with our April crossword puzzle? Here's the solution. Check up your answer by this. Let Aleck Smart know if you want more cross words.

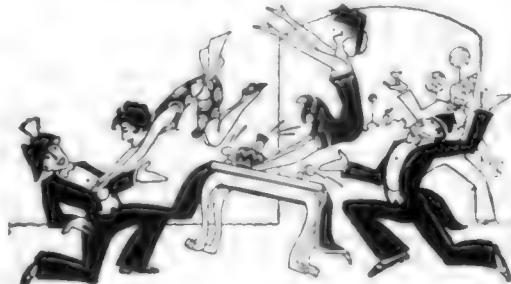


"My Man"

IN February Smart Set, we asked you girls to tell us about your ideas of the fellow you want to marry. Here you are.

"Milly," of Henderson, N. C. says: "He must be homely for the children's sake and buy SMART SET monthly. Otherwise any man will do." "Milly" gets the two big dollars. One dollar bills go to these girls: "Peggy," of Syracuse, N. Y., demands "a professional football or baseball star," but moans "they're all married, so I'm just out of luck." Frances Naylor of Spring Hill, N. J., insists "he must know how to love—and mean it." From Fresno, California, Blanche Woodside asks for a man who is noble and strong. But I want him to be just a little bit wrong." That's liberal, Blanche. Miss H. A. Shield of Larimore, N. D., says: "He must have big ears for gossip, and interpret everything for the best." Don't give him cause, lady. Then comes this honest girl from Yvonne Rose, Portsmouth, Ohio: "He must know all the late stuff, smoke cigarettes, and carry a flask." Oh, Yvonne!

Those College Boys Think Such Funny Things



Twenty years ago the girls never thought of doing the things they do nowadays. That's why they didn't do them.—Kansas Sour Owl.

Of all sad words of tongue and pen the saddest are these: "I'm not that kind of a girl."—C. C. N. Y. Mercury.

A kiss in time saves nine miles' walk.—Pitt Panther.

The main difference between my girl and a traffic cop is that the cop means it when he says, "Stop!"—Arizona Kitty-kat.

Dollar a Line Limerick Contest

We want a last line to this limerick—and we're willing to pay one dollar each for the ten we like best. Contest closes April 30, 1927. Aleck Smart's the judge. No letters returned.

*A delectable, innocent miss,
Said, "Granpa, it's nifty to kiss."
"Woof, woof," said the Sage
And made Peaches the rage;*

Just to please the Boss, after you have read Aleck Smart turn to the pages up front. You will find several interesting contests to tax your wits and maybe add to your bank roll. That every reader will win a prize is the hope of

Aleck Smart

Number three of the Princess Pat informative Series giving women really valuable and scientific facts about complexion care. Here we tell something about skin cleansing which will be news to 99 women out of 100.



How CLEANSING with the RIGHT CREAM performs a new marvel of Beauty Science.

CAN THE RIGHT CREAM do more than cleanse? Indeed yes, infinitely more! It can have exactly the same wonderful effect upon the complexion that a warm bath has upon a tired body—and for the same little known reasons.

Everyone has experienced the sensation of stepping dead tired into the warm bath, and emerging fresh as a daisy. Not many know why. Physicians call it the "reflex arc." Simply stated there is stimulation to the nerves and blood vessels which does not stop at the surface. It is carried along underlying nerves to deeper centers. (Clear down through the tissues may go this impulse started at the skin surface). Opening and cleansing the pores, stimulating the skin—that has been the sole cause of revived life.

But You Cannot Possibly Scrub Your Face As You Do Your Body

No. But Princess Pat Cleansing Cream does for your complexion precisely what a vigorous bath does for your body—and with the necessary gentleness. It does this in a wholly different, scien-

tific way. For Princess Pat Cleansing Cream removes pore film, which resists ordinary creams.

Leading skin specialists will tell you what pore film is—an invisible film which forms on every skin every day. Your face is covered night and morning. Pore film is acid and irritating. You cannot see it, but it is present, causing blackheads, oily skin, coarse pores, eruptions, etc. Perspiration and oil from the skin cause pore film. And sooner or later the skin suffers its effects.

Very well. When you use Princess Pat Skin Cleanser (scientifically formulated for the purpose) you remove pore film, as well as the customary dust and dirt which ordinary creams remove. Then, for the first time in your life perhaps, the pores of your skin will be completely cleansed, completely freed of invisible, choking pore film.

And what happens? Thousands upon thousands of tiny nerves within the skin telegraph to the deeper nerves, "we're free, we're free." Countless little blood vessels sleepily relaxed respond to the message, awaken and contract. They expel their sluggish, poisoned contents and rush fresh, pure blood to the skin, making it tingle and

glow with new health and life. Through the "reflex arc," all of nature's magic forces are concentrated to benefit the skin.

You Do Nothing New, But Your Cream Does

You apply Princess Pat Cleansing Cream just as you would any other cold cream. No new habits to form. But how different the results! A few days free from pore film, a few days with the pores really cleansed and awakened, and you could not be persuaded to go back to creams which do not remove the injurious acid film. Too, Princess Pat Cleansing Cream is delightful to use—entirely free from objectionable "stickiness." It is utterly free of any ingredient that could promote hair growth. You cannot help but delight in its use.

You cannot reasonably deny yourself the advantages of pore film removal. One jar of Princess Pat Skin Cleanser will convince—or your dealer will refund its cost.



SPECIAL

The very popular Princess Pat Week-End Set is NOW offered you for this coupon and 25c [coin]. Set beautifully boxed, contains easily a month's supply of powder and SIX other Princess Pat preparations. Please act promptly.

PRINCESS PAT LTD., 2709 S. Wells St., Dept. No. 1305, Chicago Enclosed find 25c for which send me the Princess Pat Week End Set. Name [print] _____ Street _____ City and State _____
--

Princess Pat

PRINCESS PAT LTD. CHICAGO, U. S. A.

Princess Pat perfect beauty aids include: Princess Pat Cream Skinfood and Ice Astringent (the famous Twin Cream Treatment), Princess Pat Skin Cleanser, Almond Base Face Powder, Rouge, Lipstick, Two-Purpose Talc, Perfume, Toilet Water.

It's a universal weakness

MAYBE you have observed that most of us are lazy even though we won't admit it.

The woman in the picture, for instance. Still in bed at one o'clock in the afternoon, although she should have ordered tomorrow's groceries, had a shampoo, visited the dentist and exchanged some purchases at the store.

Study your own character for a moment. Ask yourself if you are always prompt about attending to the little tasks of life.

It seems to be almost a universal failing to neglect them. And this applies particularly to tooth brushing

-that necessary twice-a-day rite. In contemplating the task itself, we lose sight of the delightful and health giving after effects.

Recognizing this human weakness we set about to create a dentifrice to meet it—a dentifrice for busy people, for tired people—even for lazy people.

Now greater speed

A dentifrice to clean teeth quicker

than ever before. And clean them whiter.

Our chemists created formula after formula. Three were selected. Each was tried by thousands. The result was noted. Then the most perfect of the three was chosen.

Minimum Rubbing

Now we offer it to you under the name, Listerine Tooth Paste. It provides a maximum of cleansing* with a minimum of brushing. The job's over in a minute. But that clean, fresh feeling in the mouth lasts a long time.

And only 25c

Compare this dentifrice with any paste at any price. Once you use it, we will wager you'll be delighted with its results—and its economy. Lambert Pharmacal Company, St. Louis, U. S. A.

P. S.—By the way, the 25c tube of Listerine Tooth Paste is a large one.

*This specially prepared cleansing medium (according to tests based upon the scale of hardness scientists employ in studying mineral substances) is much softer than tooth enamel. Therefore, it cannot scratch or injure the enamel.

At the same time it is harder than the tartar which accumulates and starts tooth decay.



LISTERINE



-J. HENRY-

"-even for lazy people"



TOOTH PASTE

-- over in a minute

FREE—*The Kissproof Girl—send coupon for 12-color art print*



Kissproof Lipstick is waterproof— it stays on!

Once applied, your lips are beautiful, full colored, gorgeous things—and not for an hour or two hours, but for the entire day. *Kissproof* is so different you will wonder how you were ever satisfied with the ordinary kind.

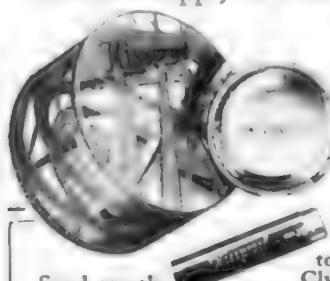
Flatters every complexion

Kissproof is such a rare blend of red and orange it will instantly make your lips vivid, brilliant, and gorgeous—yet so delicate, so subtly natural one would never know you used a lipstick at all.

Send for *Kissproof* Beauty Box

It contains a dainty, miniature *Kissproof Lipstick*, a beautifully decorated box of the wonderful new windproof *Kissproof Face Powder*, a generous supply of *Kissproof Rouge*, the last word in vivid, daring, yet natural color, and a whole month's supply of *Delica-Brow*, the

original
waterproof
lipstick
dressing for
the lashes
and brows.



Delica Laboratories, Inc., 3012 Clybourn Avenue, Dept. 1325, Chicago, Ill.

Send me the *Kissproof* Beauty Box and a 12-color Art Print of the *KissProof Girl*. I enclose 20 cents to cover the cost of packing and mailing. Check shade of powder.

Flesh White Brunette Ivory

Name _____
Address _____

My One Last Fling

[Continued from page 85]

I gazed at him. "What possible reason could he have to do such a thing? He probably wrenched the lock in some way when turning the key."

Malton made no further allusion to the matter, but three times during that long morning I heard him going round the garden to the door which gave access to the basement. And each time, as he came back, I realized by his vexed, preoccupied look that he had met with disappointment.

I was glad, not sorry, when the man who had motored us from London three days ago drove up to the bottom of the stone steps. And as my companion locked the front door of the lovely lonely villa I stood gazing over the sea, wishing Jim Malton had not spoilt, by his strange moodiness, the last morning of my last adventure.

IT WAS a strange, silent drive to Dover, but when the car drew up, close to the harbor, he crushed me to him with something of his old ardor. Tears started to my eyes. But after he had left me I brushed them aside: and as I drove on, alone, there came over me a sincere feeling of relief that I had now done, for ever, with the dangers of lawless secret love.

The two months which followed were busy months for me, and truth to tell I had almost forgotten that strange last adventure of mine when, on the first of September I accepted an offer of marriage from the man of whom I had spoken to my friend, Agnes Horsham.

"A gentleman for you, ma'am. I think he said his name was Eaton."

I was writing to tell Agnes of my engagement and when my maid opened the door I had just written the words: "I am happier than I thought it possible any human being could ever be in this drab world. Harry is an angel, and he thinks me one too. I know many think me a hard, worldly woman, Agnes, but I would marry Harry if he became ruined tomorrow. You will laugh at me, but I feel now that I know for the first time what *real* love is, and can be. I feel like a girl, a lovely, pure innocent girl, rejoicing in her first love—"

I looked around. "A gentleman for me? Show him in." I said, feeling a little vexed, aware, too, that I knew no one of the name of Eaton.

A moment later I was shaking hands with my visitor, deciding in my own mind that he was a professional man of a good stamp. But I remember feeling that he was ill-at-ease, and wondering why—most men smile when they first look at me—even now. He simply stood gazing at me, fixedly, and there was no touch of the admiration to which I was accustomed in the quiet, level glance.

At last I broke a silence which had become oppressive. "May I enquire your business?" I asked.

He answered at once, in quick incisive tones. "I have come on what I'm afraid is unpleasant business, Mrs. Bude."

"Unpleasant business?" I echoed, wondering what he could mean. And then I saw that, at last, he was beginning to be well, what shall I say?—affected by my beauty.

"Do sit down," I said conciliatingly.

He sat down, and then, after a pause, he said: "May I take it, Mrs. Bude, that your telegraphic address is *Bukolo, Frampton-on-Thames?*"

"Yes," I said quickly. "What of it?"

He opened his black attaché case, and taking out of it a telegraph form which was obviously a copy, handed it to me, and I read:

"The Old Cottage, Frampton-on-Thames. Handed in at Dover 3:25, delivered Frampton 4:17, July 3.

The motor meets you Waterloo three o'clock tomorrow. JIM."

Dover? The Motor? Jim? I shall never forget that first moment of sick terror. Could this mean—it must mean—that I was about to be cited as co-respondent in a divorce case? That Malton's account of himself had been a lie from beginning to end? That he was not a widower but a married man? And, finally, that his wife had had him watched! This Mr. Eaton, of course, a lawyer. How stupid of me not to have guessed it sooner! Suddenly I remembered the tramp who had broken his way into the basement of the villa. He must have been the detective who had tracked us down. Still, I might manage to keep out of the case. Money will do a great deal, and I had a good deal of money put away . . .

"I did receive that telegram," I said at last.

"D'you admit having motored on July 4 last, in the company of one James Malton, to a house called 'The Folly' some eight miles from Dover?"

I asked: "Am I bound to answer that question?"

Mr. Eaton made no reply to that for a few moments, and I added—"I suppose you are Mrs. Malton's solicitor?"

"Mrs. Malton?" he repeated, questioningly. And then, as I said nothing, he went on, slowly. "I think it best to be frank with you, Mrs. Bude. I belong to the Criminal Investigation Department at Scotland Yard."

Oh! how relieved I felt. Then it was Malton who had done something shady? In my heart of hearts I was not surprised. A high official of Scotland Yard had been very kind to a business friend of mine, with regard to a difficult and delicate matter concerning a case of blackmail, and the person who had received valuable assistance had been an attractive woman, though not nearly as attractive as I knew myself to be.

"I was only at 'The Folly' three days," I murmured. "And if it were ever found out—I mean if I was brought into even a police-court case—it would be my ruin, Mr. Eaton, not only as a business woman—" And then I stopped. I would not mention my engagement unless I were driven to it.

I went on, beginning suddenly to feel really nervous again: "Surely it won't be necessary for me to give evidence? And if it is, you will prevent my name appearing in the papers?"

He said suddenly: "How long had you known James Malton, Mrs. Bude? I suppose your acquaintance with him was of short standing?"

AND then, all at once feelings of acute, agonizing shame seemed to envelop me as in tongues of fire. "I—I can't remember exactly when I did first meet him," I faltered, and I saw at once he knew that I was not telling the truth.

"Try and remember," he said rather coldly.

I looked at him pleadingly. "What is it I ought to remember?"

Thank God the half-appeal went home. I saw that Mr. Eaton was beginning to feel sorry for me.

"I will be frank with you, Mrs. Bude. We know a great deal, but we do not know whether your acquaintance with Malton was of long standing—whether, for instance, you had ever been to 'The Folly' in his company before?"

[Continued on page 92]

Peace-of-Mind

Under Woman's Most Trying Hygienic Handicap



Easy
Disposal
and 2 other
important
factors

Enjoy peace-of-mind under the most trying of hygienic handicaps—utter and absolute protection, plus an end forever to the embarrassing problem of disposal

By ELLEN J. BUCKLAND, Registered Nurse

SHEER frocks and gay gowns under difficult hygienic conditions used to present a serious problem—women thus were handicapped, both socially and in business. But today, to the modern women, they come as the merest incident.

The old-time "sanitary pad," hazardous and uncertain, has been supplanted with a protection that is absolute. Wear lightest, filmiest things, dance, motor, go about for hours without a moment's thought or fear.

KOTEX—What it does

Unknown a few years ago, 8 in every 10 women in the better walks of life have discarded the insecure "sanitary pads" of yesterday and adopted Kotex.

① Disposed of as easily as tissue.
No laundry.



② True protection—5 times as absorbent as the ordinary cotton "pads."



③ Obtain without embarrassment, at any store,* simply by saying "Kotex."

Filled with Cellucotton wadding, the world's super-absorbent, Kotex absorbs 16 times its own weight in moisture. It is 5 times as absorbent as the ordinary cotton pad.

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Only Kotex itself is "like" Kotex

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Blemishes, roughness and tiny imperfections are erased from the skin surface. All trace of freckles, tan, blackheads and roughness disappear almost as if you had wished them away. You actually see your skin grow clear, fresh, ivory-white . . . and this beauty is in the skin itself—smooth, delicate, flawless beauty that powder can never give!

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Never before have women had such a cosmetic. In a few short months its fame has spread to three continents and 28 countries. Now, in just three to six days, you can have the glory of a clear, milk-white skin.

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Will you try this amazing treatment? Test it to whiten hands, face or neck. Apply in three minutes at bedtime. See what a remarkable improvement just three days make.

Send no money—simply mail coupon. When package arrives pay postman only \$1.50 for the regular large-size bottle. Use this wonderful cosmetic six days. Then, if not simply delighted, return it, and I will refund your money without comment. Mail coupon today to (Mrs.) GERVAISE GRAHAM, 25 W. Illinois St., Chicago.

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Send me, postage paid, one Lotion Face Bleach. On arrival, I will pay postman only \$1.50. If not delighted after six days' use I will return it and you will at once refund my money.

Name.....
Address.....

"Never," I cried eagerly. "Never! I swear it. It was the first time I had ever done anything of that kind!"

"Then I may take it that your acquaintance with Malton was of short duration?"

Very reluctantly, I murmured, "Yes."

"You were abroad on business from the 1st to the 9th of June. May I assume that you had not yet met this man before you went to Paris?"

For a while I could not speak, I allowed myself to sob, convulsively. Should I lie, or should I admit the truth? The fact that he was a member of the greatest Detective Association in Europe made up my mind for me. Wisely—far more wisely than I knew—I decided for the truth.

"I met him," I said in a strangled voice, "on my journey from Dover to London on June 9."

Again he glanced at his book. "I see—three weeks almost to a day before you and he went to the house called 'The Folly' together?"

I felt too humiliated, too ashamed to do more than bend my head.

"And now," he said, "We come to certain events which occurred while you were at 'The Folly'."

I looked at him in dumb surprise. To what events could he be referring? Nothing had happened at "The Folly" which could possibly be called an "event" during those three halcyon days.

"Early on the morning of July 7th a stranger effected an entrance into the basement of the house. You heard the sounds made by him, and you came downstairs in your dressing-gown. Then you very kindly went upstairs and shortly after returned with some food. You told him that the basement had not been used for a long time, and he commented on the fact that there was a peculiar odor in the scullery. You answered that it was probably caused by a dead rat."

"Yes, I remember his coming quite well," I said with quivering lip.

"The young fellow—his name is Skinner—locked the back door behind him, but he took away the key, Mrs. Bude. A week ago he went back to the house, and a certain suspicion he had formed when he was there before was confirmed. Quite properly he then went to the Dover Police-station."

He looked at me significantly and then he asked another, and a final question: "I suppose you had no occasion to go again into the basement of 'The Folly', Mrs. Bude?"

"I was only in the basement that one time," I exclaimed. "It's quite cut off from the rest of the house. What little cooking I had occasion to do was done on an oil stove in a little room upstairs which had been fitted up as a pantry."

Suddenly my visitor leaned forward. "I'm afraid," said he gravely, "that I'm going to give you a great shock, Mrs. Bude."

Mr. Eaton opened out a piece of paper he

held in his hand. "I have here a plan of the basement."

I got up and bent over the paper while he, pointing with a pencil, observed, "Here is the kitchen, in which you had that talk with the man Skinner."

"Yes?" I said hesitatingly.

"Here, next to it, is the scullery, almost as large, you will observe, as is the kitchen. Beyond the kitchen is a cellar."

He waited, and then he said slowly. "In that cellar, Mrs. Bude, was found, just seven days ago, the body of a woman."

The words "the body of a woman" seemed to be hammered on my brain—but though I opened my lips twice, I found I could not speak.

"But for the accident of young Skinner passing by that lonely way tired and hungry, but for the far greater accident of his obtaining entry into 'The Folly', the body—which is that of the unfortunate woman who was Malton's first wife—might not have been discovered for years. We have reason to suppose that there will be no difficulty in proving that the last woman James Malton took there before he took you was his wife, and that he left her there, dead or alive, the afternoon that you and he met for the first time.

"The opening day of the inquest has been fixed for next Saturday morning. I have with me a subpoena calling for your attendance. By that time the extradition formalities will have been completed, and we hope Malton will be present."

"Present?" I echoed stupidly.

"Yes, for we discovered Malton's whereabouts quite easily. He was with his new wife, a rich Canadian lady, at Deauville, and he had already paid the purchase money for 'The Folly'."

"Can nothing, nothing, nothing save me, Mr. Eaton? Must I appear at the inquest?"

He held out his hand. He forced me to rise to my feet. "Yes, you must be there, and if Malton is committed for trial you will, of course, have to give evidence at his trial for murder."

Then he became human. "I am sorry, Mrs. Bude, to have been the bearer of such ill tidings," and then, "Here is your summons to attend the inquest," he murmured.

I took it from his hand. Oh, God. I would have given all my remaining years of life for this to be an evil dream! But it was no dream.

"I must be going now," he said, and again he muttered, "I feel very, very sorry for you."

After he had gone I went back to my writing-table, and tore up the letter I had been writing to my friend, Agnes.

My "last great adventure" meant the end of my dream of happiness. It had lost me a husband and the peace that comes of marrying a good man. My visit to 'The Folly' was folly indeed.

The Danger Line

[Continued from page 79]

Danger ahead," you don't keep on, trusting in the power of your car and your ability as a driver. That is, you don't unless you're ready to "check out." And it's the same with petting.

I promised not to preach morality or argue against petting. I haven't. But I do hope that I have lifted the veil of mystery and destroyed the deplorable ignorance with which you and most girls face the facts of life. So pet, if you want to, Val, but stop with the kiss before it's too late!

Lorette wonders: "Does he love me?" "Dear Martha Madison:—How can I

find out whether the man I love cares for me? We've had lots of dates and once, in the presence of our parish priest, he spoke of marriage. I visited his home, met his mother and to all appearances made a good impression. Then the trouble started.

"He called me one Sunday afternoon and invited me to a party at his house and asked if he could come for me. The night before I had made a date for that evening, but preferred to go to Bob's party, and "stand up" the other fellow. So I told Bob to come for me and I instructed the maid who tends door at the girls' club where I live, that I was at home to no one but Bob. She misunderstood and told both boys I was not home. I waited till ten o'clock and then cried myself to sleep.

"Bob called the next day and was furious, insisting that I had deliberately broken the date. He would not believe me. I wrote him a letter, explaining in detail. No answer. Now, Mrs. Madison, in this club they don't like the girls to go out much and often they will say someone is not home without bothering to see. Father T— has told me that Bob was asking about me, and said he would never call the club again because they always told him I was out. My girl friends say he inquires about me, too. I still go out a lot, but no one else interests me. What can I do? Lorette, Omaha, Neb."

Dear Lorette:—I fear Bob has convicted you on circumstantial evidence and it's partly your fault. You gave every indication of being sincere and serious with him, so much so that he spoke once of marriage, and yet you went out with other boys. Then came the misunderstanding about your Sunday night date; and now you still go about apparently having a good time, as if the loss of his friendship didn't matter. You see what I mean. It looks bad.

Of course I know, Lorette, that deep down in your heart you really love Bob and that you've played fair with him, but when a girl wants to convince a man that she loves him and wants that love to culminate in marriage, she doesn't make dates with other fellows; the two don't jibe. Right now, you say nobody else interests you and yet you go out!

But the game is far from lost. Everything Bob has done since that Sunday night convinces me that he's probably spoiled, stubborn, sensitive, but certainly in love with you. He seems to think a great deal of Father T—, and I think in him you would find a valuable ally. Tell Father T— exactly what you have told me and ask him to talk to Bob.

Another thing, Lorette, don't be afraid to meet Bob more than half way. Call him up. If he says he won't see you, be persistent. Coax, flatter, cajole, scold, try everything until he says yes. If you can talk with him alone and in some quiet place I am sure you can win him over. And in the future, think less about how much he loves you and more about convincing him how much you love him. Love is bought with love, little girl.

MILDRED asks:—"What's the cure for stubbornness?"

Dear Martha Madison:—I have been married only a little over a year. Ours was a runaway marriage because we were opposed, but my people like my husband better now, and I love him, deeply and sincerely. At times I think he worships me. At others—!

"He gets fits of stubbornness, Mrs. Madison, and then there is no living with him. He will accuse me of things without any justification. If I pin him down to facts he shuts up like a clam, and if we are to have any peace at all, I have to coax and give in first. It hurts me awfully, because he gets so sarcastic with it.

"He is not making enough to keep up a



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not stand the harsh effect of ordinary soaps. The free alkali in ordinary soaps soon dries the scalp, makes the hair brittle and ruins it.

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home or buy me decent clothes, so I am working and trying to get ahead a little. I have a hard job and get so tired by night, that when he acts that way I can't stand it. I know he would rather I was home all day and waited on him hand and foot, but we can't afford it. I am afraid that sometime he will pack up and leave me and that would kill me. So what can I do to change him? Mildred, Chicago, Ill."

Dear Mildred:—If you've noticed these things just since your marriage I would say you were up against something fundamental. Your husband appears to be of a nervous, emotional, sensitive nature. It galls him, eats at his ego, takes a sideswipe at his business ability because you have to work. He sees other men supporting their wives and raising families and *he can't*. He wants you to look up to him as a magnificent provider and protector; *you can't*. And so he feels a great contempt for himself. It's a cancer eating deeper day by day, and he unconsciously takes it out on you.

What can you do? Turn the spotlight on him some time when he is in an amiable mood and show him these things. Isn't there a chance that he could get a better job and that you could manage on his salary even if it meant sacrificing? Clothes and comforts are nice, Mildred, but they don't give you the satisfaction that happiness in love does.

Another thing has occurred to me. Perhaps there's a fundamental involved on your side, too. Women have so long been supported and protected that most girls feel contemptuous of a man who marries and can't support his wife. You see other women, apparently having it easy, but their husbands may have bum dispositions too. Mildred, only they put up with it as part of the game. Any man is apt to be irritable if he works hard and gets nowhere. And because you have put your shoulder to the wheel perhaps you demand more from him than you should. You work hard and your nerves get frayed and if he says, "Boo" you're ready to fly into hysterics.

BUT in the final analysis, Mildred, I don't think you can improve the situation until you give up business.

Anna wants to know:—"Is he too old?"

Dear Martha Madison:—I am nineteen years old and there is a man thirty-one who has asked me to marry him, but I don't want to because he is so much older. Everybody tells me I am foolish not to, because he has plenty of money and a good position and he doesn't smoke or drink or play cards like most men do. It's hard to know whether you're picking the right one for a life partner and maybe what everybody says is true, that I should marry this man. What do you think? Anna, Fairmont, West Va."

Dear Anna:—It's all very nice, but I wonder if you happen to love him? You didn't mention it, Anna, so I was just wondering.

It's rather important!

Now, is he too old? I think not. It is my opinion that no man should marry until he is thirty and no girl until she is twenty-five. That allows plenty of time for the wild oats and character development, to say nothing of changing ideas and ideals.

But since when, Anna, did "plenty of money," and abstinence from liquor, cards and tobacco make a good husband? Some of the worst husbands brag about "having no vices." I always say, look out for that kind. Why, I've known men who would put Saint Peter to shame, angels outside the home; devils in it. Honestly, little Anna, I'd rather have a man who took a drink now and then and dropped cigarette ashes on the floor and stayed out all night playing poker but who I knew adored me and wasn't perking up his ears every time he

heard the swish of a skirt, than the kind you mention.

Certainly it's a ticklish job, picking a husband; and a marriage license is easy and cheap to get. But you don't know till after you've used it whether it was a bargain or not. That's life, Anna, and you will have to face it like everybody else. I don't say, "If you love him, marry him, that is all that matters." Unfortunately a great many other things do matter, chief among them if he has a nice disposition, is honest and sincere and is not known as a heart-breaker. And you? Are you ready to take on the responsibilities of marriage as well as its benefits? Are you willing to renounce your freedom and good times and not expect a man to treat you like a piece of rare old china? That's only part of it. So think well, Anna, but not too long.

PAL thinks:—"He likes to make me jealous."

Dear Martha Madison:—I have been going with my boy friend for about a year and lately he has begun to take my girl friend out. I know he does not like her and I think he is trying to make me jealous. He gave me a lovely present for Christmas, but right after that he changed, and yet I know he carries my picture everywhere with him. I wish you could tell me how to get back to our old relationship. That's all I want. Pal."

Dear Pal:—As I see it, there's a little matter of loyalty between friends involved. I never heard of a girl friend who acted the way yours has, but I have heard of boys who did just what your boy friend is doing, and strangely enough it worked. How do you know he dislikes your girl friend? He told you so? Isn't it just possible that he did it to allay your suspicions? Oh, Pal, I'm not trying to make your young man out a philanderer or a hypocrite. I'm just trying to help you see the light in the dark places.

If what you say is true, that he is trying to make you jealous, it probably means that he thought you didn't love him enough or make a big enough fuss over him. Altogether, I think it would be sensible and satisfactory for you to stop shooting at each other in the dark. It wouldn't lessen his respect for you, to come out in the open, nor would it cheapen you. Tell him frankly, and sympathetically, that if he has transferred his affections from you to your girl friend you do not want to stand in the way. And don't be afraid to let him see you care. I'd get a new girl friend, too, if I were you, Pal.

A married man asks:—"Can I win back my wife's love?"

Dear Martha Madison:—Your letters seem to be mostly from young girls. Can you take it upon yourself to bother with an old married man?

"My wife and I were married twelve years, separated three times. Our little girl is ten. During our last separation my wife met a man some years older than she and fell in love with him. It has lasted two and a half years and they seem to be devoted. Her affection for me has completely disappeared. This man is good to her and the little girl and makes good money. I could easily make it very unpleasant for them, but I am easy going and hate discord.

"What I wanted to ask you is if you think I have a chance of regaining my wife's affection? She is a good woman, and I guess if my mother hadn't spoiled me we would have got along all right. Ray, Battle Creek, Mich."

Dear Ray:—There's nothing so dead as yesterday's newspaper and last year's love! So how can I honestly encourage you to try and win back your wife when I'm positive it couldn't be done?

Why do you want to?

She would always be the same woman; have the same faults. You would be the same man; just as spoiled. And the past would be a barrier between you; your chance of finding happiness together is about one in a million. Her chance of finding happiness with the other man looks like a sure thing. And your own chance of finding another woman whose temperament is more in accord with yours, is good, too.

I can't feel that you are suffering because of the way things are going, and you seem to have a good opinion of the man. So for everyone's sake, Ray, let her go. And for your own special sake, stop calling yourself an old married man. It doesn't go so big with the girls.

G. E. E.: Plead with your cousin to go away and leave you and your husband alone.

Mary Y., Waukesha, Wis.: I think you should marry him. Read my answer to Anna.

Ada, Stapleton, S. I.: Which hurts more? Separation from your child or the neglect of your husband? You've had a try at both.

ALL alone, Tallahassee, Florida: You are too serious with the boys. Don't chase after them as you did the boy you liked.

Frenchy, Fort Wayne, Ind.: Don't cry for the moon, dear. It might intrigue him if you don't, just because every other girl has done it.

Flapper Ann, Brooklyn, N. Y.: Tell him you are ashamed of yourself, silly girl! And don't lose any time about it.

Billy, Columbia, Mo.: Your mother is right; live home. Encourage the young man without running after him. That is all you can do.

Mrs. R. N., Auburn, Mass.: Don't make needless sacrifices and never reproach a man when he is drunk. Better not to do it anyway; it's useless.

Mrs. L. W., Dallas, Texas: I think your local Y. W. C. A. would help you. Wish I could!

Babe O., Sioux City, Iowa: As long as you can't marry Willette you should have other boy friends. You owe that much to yourself.

E. K., Greenwood, S. C.: He is unfair; you should have other friends. But if it would make you miserable to incur his displeasure, don't do it. It's your happiness, heart and life, E. K.

A. M., Greenwood, S. C.: It seems foolish, but maybe he should see your dad. At least you wouldn't have to meet him outside then.

Smiles, Mahanoy City, Pa.: A crippled girl has as much right to love and marriage as any other. Get the young man if you can.

Rachel, Soddy, Tenn.: You will have to wait until you know them better before you can decide which you like better.

Helen, Munhall, Pa.: Why not give a party with another girl and invite him? Or have your girl friend arrange a date for four and ask him?

Peggy, Chicago, Ill.: Don't be afraid to meet him more than half way. Tell him what you have told me and don't hide your love.

Anna D., Gardner, Mass.: There is little you can do beyond being pleasant when you meet and telling him you've missed him.

Betty, Kitchener, Ont.: Don't be afraid to show your love; cultivate his family. Show him little attentions that will flatter and convince him. Make your letters a bit warmer; more personal.

HAVE you written to Mrs. Madison? Do you know that she has helped thousands of SMART SET readers in their love problems? Write her now.



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Did I Marry My Mother-in-Law?

[Continued from page 57]

endurance," I remarked. It irritated me to hear this woman praised for everything when really she had done only what any devoted mother would have done.

Perhaps had her son loved her less, I would have loved her more.

When Tom proposed to me and I accepted him, his first thought was for his mother.

"How pleased she will be!" he exclaimed. "I shall tell her just as soon as I get home tonight."

I was too happy to dampen his spirits by suggesting that he wait for a while. I expected to tell the news to my own parents, yet this had not been the first thought that came to my mind. To be frank, I was wondering how long we must wait before our marriage.

BUT I did not ask the question. After a few minutes, Tom himself asked it.

"I will want time in which to get my trousseau ready," I said. "But I can do that in a couple of months."

His face lighted eagerly, then a thoughtful look came to his eyes.

"In one way I am in a position to marry, of course," he said. "Yet I want to do what is right for Mother as well as for you. You will be my first consideration always, but Mother must be provided for, of course."

I felt a sudden check of enthusiasm. "What do you mean?" I asked. "Do you support her?"

"Yes, to a certain extent. She cannot work now as hard as she used to. It would not be fair to let her. So as soon as I got a job after leaving college I began to give her something every week. I want to continue to do so."

"She probably will not allow it," I said hopefully. "Anyway she is still writing, and must be making a fairly good salary."

"She is writing, yes, running a column for women in a home magazine, but that does not bring her in a princely sum. At her age she should be protected and cared for. She would work her fingers to the bone if I would let her, but I do not forget what I owe her."

The letter his mother wrote me the next day was so lovely and understanding that the fear roused by Tom's remarks was allayed.

"I am thankful my dear boy is so happy," she said. "He has chosen a sweet helpmate. Dear child, try to love me if you can. I do not need to try to love you."

With the note came some beautiful roses. I had to admit that my future mother-in-law was doing the decent thing.

She kept on doing the decent thing through the period of our engagement. She even insisted several times that Tom come to my home on Sunday nights without her. On each of these occasions she told her son that she had another engagement.

"I doubt if she really has," he said to me. "But she tries hard to make me think she has and I pretend to believe her. She is so brave that she makes me want to cry."

"Brave?" I repeated. "Does it take so much courage to endure the thought of her son's marrying me?"

He drew me to him and kissed me. "You know that is absurd, Ruth," he chided. "She is happy at the thought of having you for a daughter, but no mother can part with her child without a bit of a heartache. I have been the biggest part of Mother's life for twenty-six years. Of course she is not going

to lose me, for I want to settle near her. I asked her if she would consider making her home with us. It would be an economical plan."

I held my breath for an instant. Then I managed to ask. "What was her reply?"

"That it would be absolutely unfair to you and to me. She put it all so clearly and fairly that she convinced me she was right."

The breath that I was holding was exhaled in a long sigh of relief. I wanted to say "Thank Heaven!" Instead I said that his mother was certainly clear-sighted.

"It would not be easy for her, either," I added, "to give up her own place after all these years."

"Perhaps not," my betrothed agreed. "Yet it will be hard for her to be all alone. I am going to look for a tiny apartment for her in the same house in which we have our little apartment. When I proposed that last night she was pathetically grateful. By the way, do you remember if the superintendent of that house mentioned any three-room apartments there?"

"No," I replied, "I do not."

I tried to have the grace to be ashamed of the hope that sprang to my mind, a hope that there would prove to be no small apartments in the building in which we had taken our modest five-room-and-bath home.

But there were nice little rear apartments of three small rooms and a diminutive bath. Into one of these my mother-in-law moved while we were away on our wedding-trip.

As she had been sweet and considerate during the weeks preceding our marriage, I found my resentful feelings towards her evaporating. They had been small and contemptible, I told myself. She was handing her only child over to another woman, yet never voiced a regret. In fact she was so cheery and sympathetic with us in all our preparations that she called forth many admiring comments from my family and friends.

My own people lived in another part of town from that in which we were to live. I wrote them when Tom and I were to return, asking especially that we be allowed to come alone to our new home.

"You can all call on us the evening after our arrival," I explained. "But we have a sentimental fancy that we would like to have the first hour or so in our little flat to ourselves."

I TOLD Tom that I had done this. "I am sure Dad and Mother will understand," I remarked, "and that your mother will too."

"Yes," he said. "but I do not think I shall tell her when we are returning. It will be a nice surprise for her. I will telephone her from our own apartment that evening and invite her up when your father and mother come."

The scheme sounded lovely. It did not work out as well as he had hoped. At least not so far as Mrs. Maitland was concerned. I knew from the tone of Tom's voice over the telephone that his mother had said something to disturb him.

"What is wrong?" I queried when he came into the dining room where I was setting the table for our first dinner.

"Poor little Mother!" he exclaimed, his soft eyes softer than usual. "I know she is disappointed. She had prepared a surprise for our home-coming and we have gummed up the works by arriving on the sly, as it were."

"On the sly!" I repeated indignantly. "As if we did not have a right to come to our own home whenever we like without notifying anybody!"

"Of course we have," he hastened to correct the impression his words had produced. "I did not mean to intimate that we had not. Only dear little Mother has missed me a lot, I suppose, and has planned some nice things for us, just as she used to plan things for me when I came home from college. But she was very brave and fine about it and said she was glad we are back. She asked especially about you, Ruth, and sent you her love."

"She is coming up this evening, of course?" I asked.

"I am not sure." The tone was anxious. "She says she has a headache. I think, if you do not mind, that I will run down and see for myself just how she is."

"Certainly," I said. "Do go down and see how she is."

I must have managed to keep my vexation from my voice for he came to me and kissed me before going. Then he hurried away to his mother.

I STOOD still after he had left me. We had not been an hour in our home, yet here he was rushing off to the woman whom he was supposed to love less than he loved me. I had hoped we would have a kind of frolic setting the table; that he would watch me cook our dinner, would, in fact, make a sort of ceremonial of this, our first meal, in our new home.

I winked back the tears of disappointment that rose to my eyes. The fault was not Tom's. He had an exaggerated sense of duty towards his mother but she must be enough a woman of the world to check his folly and send him back to his wife. I listened eagerly for his step. I was sure he would be gone only a few minutes.

He was gone over an hour.

I did not smile when he returned. I was angry at my husband and my mother-in-law. I was also hurt.

"Hallo!" Tom exclaimed looking at the table which I had set alone. "I say, Honey, this is lovely our being here in our own place like this!"

He tried to put his arms about me but I pulled away.

"Perhaps," I said stiffly, "you would enjoy it more if you had your mother up."

"Ruth!" his voice indicated surprised displeasure. "Surely you are not vexed because I went down to see my poor lonely little mother?"

"And what about your lonely wife?" I retorted. "Does she count for nothing when your mother appears on the horizon?"

Of course I was wrong. At least that is what Tom seemed to think. Perhaps this was where I made my first misstep. For ever since then he has been on the defensive with regard to his mother.

My own parents came over that evening but Mrs. Maitland did not come up until Tom had gone down and urged her to do so. When she appeared she was cheerful, yet in a chastened way. I suspect that she had been crying. Her eyes were slightly reddened. My father commented on this to me. I replied that if she had been silly enough to cry it was her own fault. He probably thought me hard, for he spoke kindly to the widow.

"Well," he commented, "the youngsters have a pretty little place here, haven't they? I suppose you, too, were warned to keep off the grass until they had unpacked."

"Yes," she smiled sweetly, "I had ordered a chicken for them, and had a pumpkin pie all baked, for I was sure they would arrive either today or tomorrow. I made cranberry jelly for you, too, Ruth, dear," turning to me. "It was much nicer, though, for you to have your own dinner for yourselves

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to-night, so when Tom explained I decided not to bring the things up. Perhaps you will let me send them tomorrow?"

"You must come up and eat them with us tomorrow night," Tom declared.

For decency's sake I had to echo his invitation. His mother declined it, still sweetly. Somehow in doing this she put me in the wrong.

I have gone thus into details, for this has been her policy all along. She says and does nothing overt, yet by her unfailing patience with my impatience and by her self-abnegation she places herself on a pedestal at the foot of which I seem to crawl like a selfish worm!

ONCE a week she ate with us. This was always on Sunday night, the evening when she dreads to be alone. That meant that Tom and I could never have a group of young people on that evening although in my father's home that was our night for entertaining.

At first Tom insisted that I invite my friends as well as his mother, but I could not enjoy them. I suspected that she was secretly disapproving when I smoked a number of cigarettes or took more than one highball. Yet she never made any adverse comment. I wish she had, for then we could have quarreled over it.

Her silent disapproval reached its height almost a year after our marriage. It was the night of Tom's birthday that I had asked some of his friends and mine in to celebrate. Tom had urged me to invite his mother also.

"She will not have a good time," I warned him. "There are to be no elderly people here."

"She will not object to that," he rejoined. "She likes young people and they like her."

He spoke the truth. Young people do like her. She has a sympathetic way with them, the same kind of a way she had with me before I married her son. Indeed even now she has the same manner with me, but I dislike it and do not trust it. I feel that back of it she is criticizing me and regretting that I do not run things, including Tom, as she did.

But this is a digression. When my husband made a point of having his mother attend his birthday celebration I countered with the remark that in that case, I would ask my own parents.

"There is just as much reason for having two more of the older generation," I argued. "So I shall invite Dad and Mother."

"Do, certainly," he agreed. "I shall be delighted. But, my dear, you must admit that my own mother is rather more interested in the fact that I was born than anyone else except you can be."

"I wonder that you except me," I retorted.

He laid his hand on my shoulders, looking down into my eyes. I tried to pull myself away, but he held me fast.

"Darling," he said, "that speech is unworthy of you. I hate to believe that you are jealous of my poor little mother. Perhaps you do not appreciate that you are jealous, but do you think you are quite fair to her?"

"And is it fair to me for you to consider her before me always?" I demanded hotly. "I wanted this party just for our own friends, but what I want cuts no ice at all. We have no life by ourselves as most young people do."

BEFORE Tom could reply we both heard a sound that made us start, aghast. Mrs. Maitland had a latchkey to our apartment. Tom had insisted that she must have one in case she should need him in the middle of the night and not be able to rouse him by telephone. In return she had given him a key to her apartment.

The sound that startled us now was the click of our front-door latch. With one accord we ran out into the hall, but the door

was closed. Tom looked into the outer hall. Nobody was in sight.

"Somebody closed this door just the same!" I said. "It was probably your mother."

Tom shook his head. "No. She could not have gotten downstairs in this time. Besides, had she been up here she would have warned us of her presence. She would certainly have not played the part of eavesdropper."

I was not so sure. Later that afternoon when my husband and I went down to his mother's apartment to invite her to his birthday party, something in the atmosphere made me certain that she had heard at least a part of our conversation. She shook her head when we spoke of her attending the proposed function.

"An old lady of fifty-five would be out of place among you young people," she declared. "You must not feel that my living in the house with you necessitates your including me in your social activities."

"Ruth is asking her father and mother, too," Tom told her. "And you must come."

"I doubt if I can," she hesitated. "Will it be all right if I let you know a little later?"

"Yes," I said. "But until I do know I shall not invite my own people."

"Don't say that, dear," she begged. "I do not want to deprive them of the happiness of being with you."

"Yet you would deprive us of the happiness of having you with us," Tom reproved gently.

SHE gazed at him for a minute and I could see the tears come to her eyes. I was sure she was thinking that once he had been all hers and that now he was mine. Well, she had him for twenty-six years! She need not grudge the part of his heart that I can claim as mine. Heaven knows it is not so entirely mine that she cannot sometimes push me almost out of it.

"I will let you know later, dear son," she said again. "In the meantime I appreciate this kindness you children have shown me in inviting me to the birthday party."

"But for you there would have been no birthday!" Tom laughed, and she laughed back.

"I must go up and see about dinner now," I said starting towards the door. "Good-by, Mrs. Maitland. Let us know your decision soon, please."

"I shall let you know tomorrow," she promised politely. "But please do not wait to invite your parents."

Tom started to go with me. Then he turned and looked back at his mother.

"Ruth," he said abruptly, "I will be up in a few minutes. I want to make Mother say yes now."

"Oh, let her alone!" I muttered.

If he heard me he gave no evidence that he did. I went out of the little apartment, slamming the door behind me.

As on our first night at home, Tom did not join me until dinner time. Then his distract look irritated me.

"Well?" I queried. "Did you persuade your mother to condescend to attend our humble little function?"

He drew his brows together. "She did not need much persuasion," he said, "after she was convinced that I would be unhappy if she did not come."

"Unhappy!" I echoed. "Here with me and with your friends you would be unhappy just because your mother was not actually present? That is hardly a compliment to me!"

"You do not understand," he argued. "Mother's absence is not what would make me unhappy, but the knowledge that she was unhappy herself,—as she would be away from me on my birthday, under the circumstances."

"What circumstances?"

"The circumstances that my wife does not want her," he accused. "She is no fool, Ruth, and she must know that you do not like her. I know it well enough. And the fault is not hers."

"It is certainly not mine!" I exclaimed. My temper is quick anyway and it flared up at this bit of injustice. "I have done my best by your mother, but she will not like me. The very first night after we got here she resented the fact that I wanted you to myself for a while. Since then she has been invited here regularly—even when her coming has not been convenient. I know she criticizes me in her own heart."

"As you do her!" my husband accused. "Moreover she has never uttered a criticism to or of you."

"I am not so sure of the truth of that last statement!" I flung back at him. "She has not reproved me in words, no! She has no right to! But don't I know what her methods have been?—Don't I know how she has petted you and talked to you of her love for you and of her need of you? You know she does."

"And what if she does?" he demanded. His dark eyes were flashing with anger. "Does she not need me? Has she another creature in the world but me? If I have succeeded in anything in my life, I owe it to her. She worked her fingers almost to the bone for me. When I fell in love with you—no, don't sneer! I did fall in love with you and you know it! Mother was happy for me. She was happy at the idea of living here near us. You have treated her politely, of course. But have you ever been affectionate? Have you ever volunteered to kiss her? Have you ever called her anything but 'Mrs. Maitland?' No!"

SO YOU have been taking mental notes of all my deficiencies, have you!" I exclaimed. "I have never called your mother anything but 'Mrs. Maitland' nor do I propose to call her anything else. I have but one mother and I give nobody else that title. Moreover your mother has never asked me to call her anything intimate. I have not caressed her—no—for I am not given to demonstrations of affection. You and your mother are. Don't you suppose I see her hold your hand, and put her arm about your neck when she tells you good-by even when you are going to see her at the end of a few hours? You and she are sentimentalists. I am not one. I have been demonstrative with you, because I loved you and you are my husband. I have reserved my kisses for you, whereas you shower yours on your mother. I thought that sort of thing stopped by the time a small boy put on trousers. I call it silly and sentimental, but your mother adores it and encourages you in it."

Of course I ended my tirade by a burst of tears. Equally of course I regretted the exhibition of temper and told Tom so. But I did not retract what I had said about my mother-in-law. Every word was true. And I disliked her after that more than ever. Was she not the cause of all our marital discords?

Of course she came to the birthday party. I was sure she would all along. Only she wanted to be coaxed. Tom did the coaxing, not I. And he did it where I did not have to hear it. Mrs. Maitland appeared at our little frolic becomingly dressed, looking younger than a woman of her years should look.

"I say," Dennis Cartwright, an old beau of mine, said, "you have a clever mother-in-law, haven't you? She is a good sport and lots of fun."

I did not tell him that there were times when she was not lots of fun. I was aware that in spite of her smiles and merry chat she was mentally censuring the actions of my friends. I also saw her anxious look when Tom drank his own health a number of times. But I simply smiled and laughed at his silly jokes.

Perhaps it was because I myself had taken more punch than usual that a spirit of bravado seized me late in the evening. Mrs. Maitland had made an excuse for passing Tom's chair, and, while there, she kissed him on the forehead and whispered something to him. I was sure it was a request that he take no more to drink. The caress and the tender look, irritated me. I sprang to my feet and ran around to where Dennis Cartwright sat and dropped a kiss on his forehead.

"Darling!" I exclaimed, "for my sake, don't get drunk!"

He whirled about from the table, seized me and drew me down to his lap. Throwing his arms about me, he kissed me repeatedly before he let me go. I wanted to slap him, but as I saw my mother-in-law's horrified gaze, I laughed loudly.

"Dennis!" I expostulated, "I do not mind your kissing me, but I hate to have you do it where Mrs. Maitland can see it. You know what a mother-in-law always thinks of her son's wife. Don't make matters worse for me than they already are!"

Perhaps Tom would inform me later that I had spoiled his birthday party. But for the moment I did not care. I left Dennis and began talking with another man, ignoring my husband and his mother. When I looked in their direction again Mrs. Maitland had gone.

TOM was taciturn on the morning following his birthday celebration. I did not know whether he was ashamed of having been drunk or vexed with me because of my behavior with Dennis Cartwright.

I found out soon enough. He stopped at his mother's on his way home that night. I suspected that he had and was curious to know what she said to him about what had happened. His reticence on the subject was tantalizing. When dinner was over and he and I were seated in our living room, I broke a silence that was becoming awkward.

"What is the matter, Tom?" I demanded. "If you are vexed I wish you would say so and be done with it. Perhaps I might be vexed too. If I got into mud last night, you certainly got into the mire. You acted quite as foolishly as I did."

"So Mother informed me," he said.

"Your mother? She found fault with your behavior in your own home. What next?"

"She certainly had a right to reprove her own son, hadn't she?" he asked, at once on the defensive. "She would not have said a word about last night if I had not spoken of it. I asked her if she was shocked at what you did—at the way that you and Cartwright carried on and she said that she was sure you meant nothing by it."

"So it was necessary for her to explain me to my own husband, was it?" My temper was getting the best of me.

"Don't talk like a fool!" Tom commanded. "I did tell Mother that both you and I took too much punch and that I hoped she would overlook anything that happened. For you know you were actually insulting to her, Ruth, so insulting that she left our place to escape further disagreeable scenes."

"She said that, did she?" I demanded.

"No, she did not. I am giving you my own explanation of her departure," he insisted. "She made every excuse possible for you, telling me that I was drunk and that she knew you meant no harm at all. She always does make excuses for you."

"I do not wish her to make excuses for me!" I declared hotly. "As to what happened, I do not care whether she liked it or not. Dennis Cartwright and I are old friends. Moreover, I propose to have him come and see me in spite of what your mother may say."

"No matter what she thinks she will say nothing against you, and you know it!" Tom

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exclaimed. "But, if Dennis comes here too often—"

He paused.

"What?" I queried curiously.

"Nothing! Mother told me to let this matter drop, and I wish to Heaven I had never mentioned it. Ruth, she is much fairer to you than you are to her."

"Fair!" I sneered. "She apologizes for me as if I were a silly child and she a wise parent! Things have come to a pretty pass when you and she discuss my affairs. I wish you would tell her that I am quite able to defend myself and that I intend to do exactly as I please whether it shocks her or not."

Later I told my husband I was sorry that I had been cross with him. I did not say I was sorry for my harsh judgment of his mother. At heart I was more determined than ever to live a life independent of her or her wishes.

Perhaps this was one reason why I encouraged Dennis Cartwright to call occasionally. Sometimes Tom was at home. Sometimes he was not. I do not know if my husband's mother suspected how often Dennis came. But one afternoon in the spring he drove by and took me for a turn in his car. As he left me at the front door of our home Mrs. Maitland was coming up the steps. Dennis sprang forward to greet her.

"How do you do, dear Lady!" he said. He always affected a cordial manner towards women. "I have hoped to see you every time I have been here, but you have always kept out of sight."

Mrs. Maitland smiled the slow, sweet smile that so many people find attractive.

"I am glad to see you now," she said. "I shall also be glad to have you stop in at my apartment sometimes, for I am often lonely." Then, as she met my gaze, she added, "I am sure that Ruth would spare you to an old lady, or perhaps she will come with you when you call on me."

He bowed low over her hand, declaring that she would never be "old." Then with a genial good-by to me, he returned to his car.

Side by side my mother-in-law and I climbed the stairs to her apartment. I suspected that her speech to Dennis Cartwright had been meant as a reflection on me. I almost hoped that she would speak to me of his calls during Tom's absence. Instead, when we reached her landing she turned to me with her usual smile.

"Won't you come in, my dear?" she asked. "Do! I get lonely here by myself."

"So you told Dennis, just now," I remarked, following her into her apartment and closing the door behind me. "While we are on this subject, Mrs. Maitland, I want to remind you that it is not my fault if you are lonely. Tom always pities you for your solitary state, but really I am not to blame for it. I did marry your son, yes. But he asked me to, and, you know that you yourself introduced him to me. And your influence over him was never stronger than it is now. Not a day passes that he does not come in here to see you. I do not know how we could make you less lonely unless we shared our apartment with you. I have no doubt that Tom would like to do that."

She stood looking at me. She had marvelous self-control, for although she grew very pale she gave no other signs of being upset, yet she must have felt angry. When she spoke her voice was low and steady.

"My dear Ruth, I did not intend to intimate that it is the fault of anybody that I am lonely. I have been lonely ever since

my husband was taken from me twenty-five years ago. I am sorry if I have spoken of this often or have seemed ungrateful to you and Tom." Her voice quavered slightly on the name, then regained its steadiness. "You have both been dear, considerate children. As to living with you, while I appreciate your suggestion that Tom would be glad to have me, I could never do that. You remember that the marriage-service directs that a man shall leave father and mother and cleave unto his wife. I do not think that we can improve on that rule, Ruth. That we sometimes try to get around it is a mistake, but fortunately, a mistake that can be rectified. Won't you come in and sit down instead of standing there?"

I shook my head. It was so impossible to agitate her that she maddened me. She always put me in the wrong. If she would only resent my jealous anger! But she did not. With a heart too full of rage and self-disgust to speak, I hurried from her apartment and rushed up to my own quarters.

TOM was late in coming upstairs that evening and dinner had been ready for a half-hour when he appeared. One look at his face convinced me that he had stopped at his mother's apartment. He ate little.

After we were in bed that night he spoke of what was on his mind.

"Ruth," he said, "Mother tells me that she is going to move to the East side of town when her lease expires. She has decided to go into a cheap boarding-house over there, giving up her little home. I fear she will be lonely, but she feels it will be wisest. I had a long talk with her on my way in this evening."

"I was sure you did."

"Well," he said bitterly, "you need not speak of it in that resentful tone! God knows she is going away soon enough!"

Instead of protesting I held my peace. Mrs. Maitland was going away! At last I would have my husband to myself.

I have never known what she said to him about my outburst on that Spring afternoon. Perhaps she never told him of it. Her method has not been the direct one of accusation, but the indirect one of sad, pensive silence.

She does not live near us now, but whenever Tom is late I suspect that he has been to see her. He seldom tells me of his visits to his mother, and when he does he only mentions them casually.

She has stopped coming to our apartment for Sunday night suppers. When she dines with us, once in a while, she forbids Tom to take her home, but asks him to call a taxi for her, and goes alone. On these occasions I feel that at heart Tom is reproaching me, and that his mother is, too.

I sometimes wonder if the time may not come when I shall be driven to tell my husband that he must choose between his mother and me. Had she continued to live near us, I am sure that I would have done this sooner or later. When I think that she may have suspected this danger and moved away to avert it, I almost hate her.

You see she has never reproached me; has never criticized me; has, in fact been a model mother-in-law. My friends all call her that. So do my parents. Yet if my home is ever broken up, it will not be because I have ceased to love my husband or because an immoral woman has tempted him to sin. It will be because of the influence of a good woman, a virtuous, self-abnegating character, a devoted person, my mother-in-law.

DO YOU think there is something wrong with modern marriage? Do you think the condition can be remedied or better still, prevented? Elinor Glyn, one of the greatest living authorities on love and marriage suggests in June SMART SET that taking "Love on Approval" might help. Read her article and see how the idea appeals to you.

The Time She Didn't Tell

[Continued from page 67]

eyes as they caressed her face, and the timid tender response that shone in hers.

I said that it was because of my past that I had found myself on the brink of this disaster, but looking back I realize that it was into my past that I looked for guidance. The average man, I suppose, finding himself in such a position would have put the matter in a straightforward way to his wife. "Let us be honest," he would have said. "I realize that you and this man are in love with one another. It is an impossible situation. You must choose between us." That is what the average man would have advised me to do. "Put the issue straight to her. Beg her to stay with you, and let her choose." And it is probably what I should have done had there not been the memory of a certain incident in my past to guide me; an episode in which I had stood in much the same position to the wife of another man, as this young man stood to Joan.

If ever I have loved any woman except Joan, it was that woman. She was blonde and twenty-three, and for five years she had been married stodgily to a lawyer several years her senior. It was love between us almost at first sight. I had been asked, at a somewhat formal party to take her in to dinner, and for the whole of that enchanted evening I was unconscious of the presence of any one except ourselves. I don't think that I addressed during dinner a single remark to the lady that was on the other side of me, and the moment that we went into the drawing-room afterwards I walked straight across the room to her. I forgot what we talked about. At such times the words that one uses have little meaning.

Within an hour of waking up next morning I had rung her up. We made no pretense of our feelings for one another. The very first afternoon that we were alone together I kissed her.

"If only"—that was the keyword to our relations. If only things could have been a little different. If we had both been free, or I had been a little older and less poor, if she had had no children, if in a curious way she had not felt that her husband depended on her. However easy it may be to say that two people, when they fall in love with each other, should cut and run, it is not easy actually to do it when the forces of material conditions are arrayed against you. "This is impossible," we said. "We must get clear away. We must make an end of it." But when nothing comes definitely to force that decision on you, and when there is always something waiting to be done tomorrow or the day after or next week; when the decision has been postponed once—well, I don't know how it is but the days seem to go by, and nothing happens. As they pass you become somehow less anxious that anything should happen. You follow the instinct that is in us to take root like trees where we are planted, you find that the situation that seemed impossible is quite tolerable after all. You say, "Yes, we will run away of course," but you add, "not yet though." and you say it with less conviction, and gradually like all others this love of yours begins to cool.

DO YOU do your own petting or do you let some other fellow do it for you? It seems to me nowadays that a girl pets with everyone but the man she is engaged to. I don't like it but I'm darned if I know what to do about it! After you have read my article in June SMART SET perhaps you can tell me why I Should Share my Sweetheart.

There is a long break—a holiday. For several weeks or months you do not see each other, and by the time you meet again, your love somehow is less intense. The danger period is at an end. It may be that I am wrong. It may be that I am dogmatizing from my own experience, arguing from the particular to the general—though how else are we to argue I do not know, for we must work always from what is known to what is unknown—but I wonder how many elopements would take place were not action forced either by discovery, or by the husband's delivery of an ultimatum.

With poignant clarity the details of that distant romance came back to me. I did not need to be reminded how we should have behaved if in the first flush of our love for one another a choice had been forced on us. And remembering that, I saw how, as likely as not, Joan would behave were I to force such a choice on her. At any rate, the risk would be too great. So I did, consciously, what years back that elderly lawyer had done unconsciously. I did nothing. If Joan loved so overwhelmingly that nothing but flight could make her happy, then nothing that I could do would keep her, but if she were only half in love, sooner or later, I knew I should get her back.

I won't pretend that the next few weeks were anything but wretched. Times without number I was on the point of screaming out:

"But this is impossible, it can't go on. One way or the other we must decide."

But each time I bit the words back upon my tongue. At all costs these things must remain unsaid. How much or how little happened during that period I shall never know. I do not want to know. There are some paths better left unexplored. I was conscious continually of the strain about me—of telephone calls and special messengers and hasty meetings. But as I watched the lines of worry deepen about Joan's eyes, I knew that the struggle was entering its last phase. I knew that the time had nearly come for me to suggest that month's holiday abroad which would provide the break during which they could manage to forget each other.

It was a hard time. I will not pretend that it wasn't. Not for anything would I live through it again; but at the end I got Joan back. And I learned what is perhaps one of the chief lessons that we are sent into the world to learn—that we can never escape from our past. We must carry always the obligations that we have incurred. All the things that we have done, all the things that we have thought and said and felt, have become a part of us to influence us and direct us, to recompense or revenge. There is no escaping the results of anything we do. But this also I have learned, that our past forges weapons with which the future may attack us, but at the same time it forges the armor with which, if we choose to use it, we may defend ourselves. We are never left unprotected, if we have the resolution to take up the weapons that lie to hand; even as we pay for everything, so if we are strong, we can win through.



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Has She the Right to Motherhood?

[Continued from page 44]

time she repeats it she lashes me with barbed thongs.

"She will say, 'Eileen, dear, it is hard, I know. But later on a good man will come into your life and even if you do not love him as you did Phil, nevertheless you will find happiness in your babies!'

"In my babies! God, I could scream every time she repeats it! I beg her not to; but she is of the persisting sort who believes that repetition wears away rocks. She thinks, of course, that I object through loyalty to Phil.

"Lately as torturing doubts whirl me in circles, I often wonder what she will say if I suddenly blurt out the truth. Somehow, for all her sympathy, it would be easier to confess to my father. My breath halts when I think of that. I can picture the scene that would take place. Imaginary, it is true! But when a man's entire life has been an open book it is easy to anticipate what a certain page or chapter will be. My father is a sincerely religious man. Kind and charitable in material matters, he is uncompromising against evil and evildoers.

"He would first go ashen gray. But the only outward sign of the blow would be the startled light in his blue eyes and the sudden tightening of his jaws. Then his glance would slowly transfix me and each word he uttered would fall with the crushing impact of measured blows from a sledge. If only he would fly into a fury and berate me! Out of such a reception might eventually come pity and understanding. But no, implacable in his judgment of the transgressions of others, he would not shirk for himself or the ones he loves. He does love me. I know that. Yet I would have to pay to the full. No other thought would enter his mind.

"Only once would anger sweep him from his balance—not rage, but the blasting indignation of the righteous man offended.

"It would come when, during his orgy of self commiseration for the shame brought to him, I would suggest that I might avoid the shame by avoiding the maternity.

"Murder! How dare I suggest that? Would I add this crime to my others? Would I make him an accessory by even mentioning so detestable an alternative?

"OH, NO—as I had sown so I must reap. I must pay regardless of what those who loved me must also pay. And the babe? Why the question of what it would have to pay would never enter his mind. He would do his duty, maintain the proof of my shame in comfort. But he would never, so long as he lived, forget that the child was the cause of his own public humiliation. And if I should rebel because he let the child know what he was and treated him as a pariah, my father would remind me that the sins of the parents are visited on the children.

"I love my father. As he is, he is. His moral code is a part of him, as involuntary as the beating of his heart. It hurts to think that I shall drag his head in the dust.

"Time will soften his judgment of me if I submit to his will, because down in his heart he loves me deeply. But even so, were I to attempt to cheat Nature he would hate and despise me, would cast me off entirely. That, he would hold, was an unspeakable defiance of both God's law and man's law. Think of it—either way to be

slayed by one law or the other. A noble code—to let the woman bear all of the burden, all the responsibility. Hers the shame, hers and the babe's—and hers the terrible duty of deciding whether she shall become a murderer (as the code has it) or whether she shall betray her helpless babe, her own flesh and blood to lifelong social obliquity.

"Then I pray: 'Oh Gentle Saviour, why hast Thou permitted men to impose such torture on frail women? Is not the Father's hand behind all the laws of procreation? Where is the justice in such a law that afflicts mankind alone? Are the creatures of the wild, God's creatures, too, held less worthy because they are born out of wedlock?' That is one of the arguments with which I bolster my maternal moods. Then I realize it is sheer sophistry. Man, the dominant creature, after His image, is denied the freedom of the lesser creatures. Conventions are his shackles, society his jailer through all his life. The unwed mother answers in this life and to man, not to God and His infinite understanding!

"I have seen with my own eyes the payment exacted from an unwed mother and her child. She lived in our suburb, but was not of our class. Oh, yes, I remember that the members of our local aid society talked sympathetically and made promises without end. And what happened! They furnished a layette, and potted about the girl for awhile, used her as a diversion and an illustration of their own virtues and chastity. But when the girl was up and ready to work would any of these women employ her? Would they, indeed! Oh, no, it was not safe to bring her into homes where there were susceptible men; and, again, she would be a bad example for growing daughters. And what about the child? A nice child, truly, good to give toys to at Christmas time and thus win that rosy glow of generosity that fits so well at Yuletide. But play with their children? Well, really, you know how it is! Children are so curious. They will ask embarrassing questions.

"Sometimes I am on the verge of going to my mother. I know I would get sympathy and aid, as she saw it. 'Good heavens,' she would exclaim, 'we mustn't lose a moment! We'll go to Dr. Blank this very afternoon!'

"And if I should demur, explaining that I wasn't sure just what I wanted to do, why then I can see her amazed consternation.

"Was I crazy? Had I no thought of our social position? Because I had been foolish enough to get into this predicament was I crazy enough to hesitate about getting out of it?

"I might suggest the possibility of my going away to have the babe. Then what a row there would be. She would deluge me alternately with contempt, logic, ridicule, tears. What sort of a creature was I that would want to have a fatherless child saddled to me for life? That sort of thing, she would argue truly, doesn't happen to girls of my class.

"My father and mother, you see would be in accord in only one particular. Neither would give the least consideration to the rights of the unborn babe. I shrink from going to my mother for the same reason I avoid confession to my father. Once either of them learns the truth the decision will be taken entirely out of my hands. I wonder what will happen if my parents are

ever opposed to each other in this matter. Mother would never yield to him in this, though she usually gives in when other issues arise. Thus I would be the cause of their first serious difference, a difference that might end no one knows where.

"I have said to myself that I will go off and have my babe. I could easily gain their consent to a trip abroad for a few months. In fact I have already broached the matter. I could find a safe retreat, say in France. After my ordeal is over I could have the babe adopted by respectable people, paying enough money to assure its future. I could stay with it awhile, might even arrange to see it at intervals afterward.

"Then it all blows up in smoke. There are dozens of reasons why this is the least possible solution of all.

"This much is sure—if I have my child I could never give him up even though I have to give up everything else in the world. But even though I sacrificed my life, living an endless lie, it would not solve the problem. 'Where is my daddy?' he would come to ask; and though I might put him off awhile with a story of widowhood, sooner or later he would demand details of relatives, or birthplace, or the thousand and one things which bind every human being to his kin. And if he did not question, the world would. Though I might escape his scorn for the injury I had done him, he could not escape the scorn of the world.

"Aside from this, love for my parents would stand in the way of such a course. Could I hide away in the world, leaving them in complete ignorance? Yet to tell them anything would defeat my purpose, laying the way wide open to disclosure. I know well that in my ordeal emergencies might arise. If that happened, either they would have to be notified, the bolt striking them with cruel suddenness; or, having hidden my identity, I would vanish completely, as other girls have done. I could not risk this for my parents.

THREE is a dear woman I know, a widow, the mother of a boy away at school. She loves humanity. Liberal minded—radical, some say—she is a tearer down of idols and a puncturer of conventions.

"Like an inspiration the thought came to go to her. And I was not disappointed. She understood as though she herself had been through a similar ordeal. 'Have your child,' she counselled, 'if you are sure you possess the courage to make the necessary sacrifices!'

"Motherhood," she said, "is the balm for all sorrows, easing the sting of a faithless husband, of poverty, of disgrace, of physical suffering." The very theme irradiated her. She bared a hidden chapter of her own life in illustration.

"The daughter of an aristocratic family she had eloped with a young gardener. Her mother was dead and her father never relented. And presently the husband, utterly worthless, had run off with a housemaid, leaving her alone to bring their child into the world.

"And the child had transformed life for her, crowning her mistake with the diadem of maternity. All she had suffered was as nothing compared to her reward. Her struggles for her child's sake had been happiness indescribable. Only if I bore my child would I understand what she meant.

"From the babe's earliest days of under-

standing I must accustom him to the truth, not leaving him unprepared for the blow of sudden discovery. By facing the world frankly and demanding respect I would convince my child that no shame rested upon him. She instanced the divine Bernhardt who, by her very candor, had retained the world's esteem for herself and her love child. She said: 'It is only because people show shame in illegitimacy that it becomes shameful.'

"But he will grow up," I said. "He will want to marry. Will any one, would even you, want a son or daughter to marry an illegitimate child?"

"WHY of course," she said, "provided the child was worthy in other respects. That is where you will be held accountable."

"I went home elated, my head in the clouds, glad to pay all the penalties because they would fall only on me. But in the very height of my exultation the specter Doubt raised its head again. It is torturing me all the while! I do not get a moment's peace!

"Miss Smith, you can help me. You know many girls who have gone through my trouble. Let me talk with them. From one of them who have been tortured by doubts as I am tortured I may find out what to do. The ones who have averted maternity can tell at what cost to them; those who have borne their babes can tell whether motherhood is worth all the sacrifices it involves to an unwed girl."

"My poor girl," I said finally, "I would do anything to help you, but what you ask is impossible. How could I betray the confidence of these other girls by letting their identity be known?"

She was quick to acknowledge my helplessness.

"But," she said hopefully, "you have helped them in their trouble, gained their confidence, talked with them, have seen into their hearts and minds . . . Tell me what they said and thought . . . Tell me what they did and the result!"

Of course I did as she asked, but though we went deeply into the matter touching on many cases, we, of course, arrived at no definite conclusion. This much she gained, however—the certain knowledge that only from within herself could she hope to find the answer to her problem. That at least was helpful because it narrowed the wilderness through which she was groping.

And so this young wanderer passed out of the Court and out of my knowledge. I do not know how she met her problem finally, nor if she ever solved it either wholly or in part. I do not know who she is nor whence she came. She did not tell me and I did not ask her.

But out of this contact I have learned something of immense value—something that will be of inestimable help, if not in curing, at least in easing, the hurts of other girl victims of the world's misunderstanding.

It is that the real punishment of the unwed mother lies not in the obvious penalties as the outside world sees them. It lies in the terrible doubts which scourge her ceaselessly. To go through physical torture would be blissful by comparison. Her punishment lies in having to choose a course blindly, unable to determine what is best when the welfare of those she loves and her own future depend entirely on the decision she makes, be the decision right or wrong.

DO YOU think your face is your fortune? Do you say to yourself when you are looking at some silver screen star—"Why, I'm as beautiful as she is!" Did your vanity ever prompt you to enter a beauty contest? I did and when I won I started on what I thought was the road to fame and fortune. When you read my story in June SMART SET you will realize as I do now that it was really the road that led to nowhere.



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You Can't Divorce Love

[Continued from page 37]

I sat up, staring at him, not realizing at first what he meant. Then I understood. The name I'd given him, "Miss V—" made him think the injured woman was Rita.

"No," I whispered. "Not the woman I'm about to marry. My wife! My former wife!"

He drew back, at that, but didn't say anything. I suppose there wasn't anything to say. I went right on.

"Don't you see the position I'm in? This girl I'm engaged to is waiting for me, right now, to meet her and take her to dinner, to the theater! And I can't go. I can't face her. What shall I do? I'm half mad."

"You can't stay here," he said. "No use in that. The patient won't be conscious, for hours. And the rules of the hospital, as you know, bar visitors, after nine o'clock. Why don't you go home and get some sleep? Tomorrow morning—"

"I couldn't stand the waiting," I told him. "Aren't you coming back here tonight?"

HE SAID he was and promised to telephone me, if I would give him my number. I wrote it on a card.

"Maybe you think it queer, my feeling the way I do," I said to him. "But I can't help it. This woman was once a part of my life. I thought that was all over. Now I know it isn't. I don't say it's love. I don't know. But there's some tie, some bond, tearing the heart out of me. Can you understand?"

"Better than most people," he said. "No man and woman who have ever really loved each other can entirely part. They may form other ties, but the first one will always remain. You can't destroy it, although it takes some big crisis, like the one you are going through tonight, to prove that it exists. Doctors understand such things better than most people, because they come in contact with them. I'm sorry for you, because I know what you must feel. But I can't advise you. Not as to the future, at least. Right now I think you ought to telephone your fiancee that you can't meet her. Make some reasonable excuse and then go home and wait until I call you. Nobody can tell what the next few hours will bring. Your former wife is a very ill woman. Go home and get some rest. I'll call you, without fail, before midnight."

I left him, then, of course. There was nothing else to do. But I couldn't go home. Not right away, at least. I wanted to be alone, to think. And I knew, if I went to my apartment, that Rita would call me up. So I got into my car and drove for a couple of hours, through the rain, thinking, thinking, getting nowhere. I had something to eat, not because I wanted it, but to kill time, then I put my car in the garage and went to my apartment. I didn't dare stay away any longer, for fear the doctor would call up, and find me out.

As I entered the living room a figure in evening dress sprang from a chair and came toward me. It was Rita. I stared at her in astonishment, stupidly asked her what she was doing here. She caught at my arm.

"What has happened?" she asked. "Have you been in an accident?" I'd tried to clean the stains off my coat before having dinner, but I still looked pretty well messed up, I guess. "I've been trying to get you on the telephone for hours," Rita went on. "When they told me you didn't answer, I got worried and came down to see what was the matter. The superintendent let me in.

We thought you might have had a stroke or something. Where have you been?"

I told her. There wasn't anything else to do. Told her the whole story. She sat very quiet for a while. I saw that she was terribly hurt.

"You might have telephoned," she said. "I understand how you feel about this woman, about helping her, but what about me? Haven't I any claims?"

There was no use in trying to talk the matter over then, and I told her so.

"I'm too upset to think straight, now," I said. "Let's leave everything until tomorrow. I'll feel more like myself, then."

Rita wouldn't listen to that. I could see that she was terribly angry and jealous. Any woman would have been, I suppose.

"Do you mean to tell me," she said, "that with our wedding day just a week off, you can put me aside like this? Because of an accident you couldn't help? Does this woman mean more to you than I do?"

That was just the question. I didn't know. Right then, her injuries, her recovery, seemed to mean more than anything in the world, as far as I was concerned.

"Rita," I said. "She may be dying!"

"I understand that. So are hundreds of other people, every hour of the day. I realize that this thing has been a terrible shock to you. Injuring her. Injuring anybody. You've wanted to do everything you could. Now that you've done it, you should try to put the affair from your mind. Why push me aside for someone who went out of your life long before you met me. Someone you claimed meant nothing to you at all? Do you call that love? Suppose this had happened after we had been married? What then? Would you have left me, to go to her? I'm sorry the woman's hurt, terribly sorry, but outside of that she means no more to me than any other woman and she shouldn't, to you. Maybe I am jealous. If I am, I have a right to be. This woman—"

I stopped her, then. We weren't getting anywhere.

"Why drag her into it?" I said. "She knows nothing whatever about the affair, not even who struck her. She may never know."

"And yet, your thoughts are of her, not of me, the woman you say you love!" She began to laugh, hysterically, in spite of my efforts to quiet her.

IT WAS a frightful situation, and there seemed nothing I could do about it. I know that Rita expected me to take her in my arms, kiss her, make love to her. And I couldn't, with my ears straining every moment for the ringing of the telephone bell, the message from Dr. H—. Strange as it may seem—and it seemed strange to me, I'll admit—I couldn't think very seriously about Rita, about the bitter and angry things she was saying to me, with my thoughts on that bell. The doctor had said he thought the patient would live, but he was not sure. I knew that any instant I might hear that she was dying or dead. I think, now, that if Rita had been an older and wiser woman she would have gone and left me. Instead of that she got more and more angry, blamed me more and more.

I do not want to give the impression that I did not care for Rita or that I had ceased to love her. But what I was going through was a deeper, more tragic thing. A different kind of love, I suppose. Some feeling that had nothing whatever to do with physical love. The sort of feeling a man

might have for an old, a very dear friend. Then Rita, tired of blaming me, came up and put her arms around my neck. She tried to kiss me but I turned away. I had to. Rita was trying to win me back by appealing to my emotions. I didn't want that, not then! I could think of nothing but a white face, with mud on it, and a trickle of blood just showing under a wisp of damp hair.

While Rita stood staring at me as though I had struck her, the telephone bell rang. I snatched up the receiver and heard Dr. H—'s voice.

"The patient is doing very nicely," he said. "She keeps calling for you. I presume it is you, since she uses your first name. Not quite out of the ether yet, of course. I feel very confident, but there are complications. It is possible that she may have a definite paralysis, but it's too soon to say, as yet."

I dropped the receiver, shuddering. For the moment I had forgotten about Rita. She stood near the door, pulling at the engagement ring I had given her.

"Here." She laid the ring on a chair. "I guess she needs you more than I do." Then she went out.

I did not attempt to stop her. I was thinking of the words of the wedding service—"to have and to hold—for better, for worse, until death do us part."

I think I did right. The question is one that only time can answer. My former wife and I have remarried. She is a helpless cripple, but I think she is happy. I am doing my best to make her so, and have nothing to regret. Not even Rita, for she is married, too.

Second-Hand Husbands

[Continued from page 19]

so unhappy, but Alice began to be motherly to him. She knew best about everything! She knew what he should eat and wear and do! He grew so irritated at last, that he longed for his first wife who in the short spells between her tempers had been gay and attractive and let him have his own way.

I knew a girl who married a divorced man whose first wife "misunderstood" him.

The sweet thing was full of sympathetic hero worship; she wanted to "understand" him all the time, but she bored him to death because she did not understand men or their natures, and overloaded him with cloying sweetness. So he thought of the thrills he had had, when some scene of misunderstanding had been explained in his first marriage.

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I Knew I Belonged to Him

[Continued from page 22]

mustn't," I said. He picked me up and started out of the room with me.

The Sheik carried me as if I were a feather, running swiftly in what seemed to be circles, but, later I found out that he was only avoiding and dodging people.

He put me down at last on a little wrought iron balcony that overlooked a garden which had been converted into a desert scene. I caught my breath at the picture below. Little striped tents with dim colored lights were pitched here and there. Figures seemed to drift instead of walking through the garden. I heard a strain of Gypsy music in the distance.

"Once in the Riffian desert I slept under tents and dreamed you were there under the African stars with me," the man said, and there was a quality in his voice that made me know he was telling the truth, but it was so baffling. How could he have known me, without my knowing him? Surely I could never have forgotten him.

"I DON'T understand. You said you've known me all your life."

"I said in my dreams, Allien," he corrected.

"Who are you?" I demanded.

"What's in a name?" he countered. "Don't you feel somehow, that we're not exactly strangers?"

"Yes, but I'd really like to know who you are."

"This is a night of mystery, and mask. It is only a page out of a romantic book. For the moment will it not be enough for me to say that I am nobody, nothing, but an adventurer. For I was only that when I first began to dream of such a girl as you! I was only that in the Riffian desert when you seemed sleeping in the tent under those burning stars. Look," he lifted his hand toward the skies, "those stars seem almost pale, and cold compared with the desert stars I marched and dreamed under."

"I know," I said, "you were with the Foreign Legion in Africa." In that moment something seemed to happen to the stars above us. Their gold deepened, and they burned like twinkling tongues of flame.

The whisper of voices below had risen to a gay sound, topped by soft laughter. We looked over the balcony, keeping well within the loitering shadows. Men in livery were going from tent to tent placing little cocktail shakers, and glasses on the small tables in front of each tent. The music became louder and more ardent.

"I'm going to get a shaker for us," declared my Sheik, slipping through the French window.

Left alone, I wondered what strange fate Charlie Footner's party had arranged for me. Never before had any man appealed to me as strongly as this one who had carried me off because he claimed me as his girl. The whole situation was intriguing, and I found myself remembering how he said he had dreamed about me in an African tent. Of course, I understood that he had not actually dreamed of me as Allien Stanton then but as the girl of his heart.

Suddenly a tinkling sound seemed to be drifting to my balcony. The Sheik was standing just inside the window whisking a shaker back and forth. A moment later we were holding little glasses of frothing amber stuff toward the heavens—

"To my Sheik," I said, and I was amazed at my own words.

The tall robed man bowed gracefully. "To the girl of my dream in an African tent," he whispered, and we drank the frothing amber stuff. It was a Charlie Footner's

cocktail. 'Nough said! I felt as if I were soaring off toward the skies, with the Sheik, and that the voices below, the tinkling of ice and the Gypsy music were soaring with us.

Babel seemed suddenly let loose in the garden below. Girls and Sheiks were cheering and clapping at the sight of five negroes, dressed in the mode of wildest Africa, who were making their way to an artificial palm bower with musical instruments. The dance orchestra had arrived and the outdoor dancing platform was quickly filled.

"Let's dance," I cried and I was tugging at my Sheik's arm.

"Right-o, let's," he said.

Curiosity as to his real identity suddenly returned to me. I hung back on his arm, demanding to know his name. "If you don't tell me, I won't dance with you," I said.

He laughed, knowing, I suppose, that I had no idea of carrying out my threat. "I'll phone you tomorrow, and tell you all about myself. It's so much more fun this way."

"Fun for you; you already know me. I haven't even got a name to call you by."

"Give me a name for tonight," he said.

I turned to him, impulsively deciding on a name. "All right Mister Smarty Sheik, I'm going to call you Go-Go—"

"Go-Go!" he repeated, "Why such a funny one?"

"Because you remind me so much of the hand-kissing, lounge lizard bird I've got to lunch with tomorrow."

"What's that? Who're you having lunch with?" he demanded, and I was thrilled because I felt that he was jealous over the idea of my lunching with another man.

"Oh, he's one of those foppish Counts. Count Goushardy. But I call him Count Go-Go Goolash."

"Look here, why the devil should I remind you of such a bird?" he said.

"Because you're so different," I answered. "But, come on my Go-Go, dance me, honey, dance me."

I was jostled into my partner's arms by the surge of the dancers, and for a thrilling moment clung against him, unable to move, and not caring to.

"I'd give anything to look into your eyes for a moment," he whispered into my mask, as the dance ended.

"On our balcony now, if you let me see yours," I answered. I was eager to get a glimpse of his whole face.

In another moment we were standing close together on our own little balcony, our masks pulled away. My Sheik was handsome in a dark fiery way, and his eyes glowed with black flames.

"Allien, do you hear me? I'm telling you that I love you, that tonight is the beginning of everything. Tomorrow, I'll call you and tell you my name, and everything."

SWEPT off of my feet in that mad moment of romance it made no difference who he was, or what he was. Tomorrow seemed vague, and far away. The present alone counted.

The orchestra struck up. "Tonight You Belong To Me," and we went down our eyes filled with understanding.

Dawn was flaming above the roof tops of New York as we got into a taxicab. My Sheik and I were alone. Claire hadn't been in evidence for an hour, but I was too worn out from the excitement of the party, and the emotional strain of meeting the man of my own dreams to worry about Claire. She was plenty able to take care



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of herself; sober, or tight. I slumped against the Sheik's shoulder, and closed my eyes heavily. I was not passing out from drinking. When a girl, used to relying on cocktails for her pep, really falls hard for a man, romance gives her kick enough. Consequently, I'd gone a little easy on the champagne.

"Dead to the world, aren't you?" he murmured over me. "I'm dying, too."

The cab careened, stopped shortly. I was helped out in a daze. I suppose the elevator boy thought we were a fine pair of boiled owls. But, there was only one thing on my mind then—sleep. It was so uncomfortable sleeping in an upright position.

It was dark in Claire's apartment, or it seemed that way because my eyes remained closed. Things seemed to be in the way at every turn. But, somehow we reached the living room. The bed swirled out of the shadows, and commenced going around like a carousel. I felt it come up underneath me. There was a sinking sensation—then blankness.

SUNLIGHT, pouring in the windows, dazzled my eyes shut again as I awakened from that sleep of utter exhaustion. Thoughts, memories, and dreams jumbled through my mind while I lay there trying to straighten out the awful mental tangle. A Sheik, handsome in a dark fiery way, and with eyes that glowed like black flames kept dancing through my mind pictures. Behind him came mother, and a foppish sort of foreigner, bending and scraping over everything and everybody; Claire ran in between these two groups chasing the boot-legger, and the whole negro orchestra that had played in the garden were rolling their eyes at me.

"Claire, Claire," I said, and reached out to wake her. I was alone in the bed! This realization cleared my mind. I popped up, amazed to find myself in all my clothes of the night before except for my shoes. My beautiful opera cape was flung over me as a cover.

My eyes suddenly rested on the bedside clock. It was two minutes of twelve! My mother was due at noon sharp—and, oh, what a stickler she was for punctuality! I leaped out of bed, and pulled off my dress with one yank, and slid into a negligée.

A sound in the living room startled me. I flew to the bed-room door, and beheld some sort of striped commotion on the divan.

I tried to smother the soft little scream that burst through my lips.

My Sheik of the night before got to his feet, bewildered, and looked about the room. There was a sheepish plea for enlightenment on his face, but all I could think of was that my mother was due in a few seconds, and he must not be found in the apartment. Good Heavens! The situation was scandalous. A man in party costume in the apartment at noon, having slept and, Claire not even there!

"Quick, quick, my mother's due right now! You've got to beat it."

My words drove some of the bewilderment from his face: "Good-night! That last soup must have knocked me for a loop. I tumbled on this divan—"

"Call me up later, but, step on it, now. We can't be caught this way by my mother. She's due now."

"I've got on dinner clothes under this costume." He pulled the Sheik outfit off over his head and handed it to me. "Stick it away," he said.

At that moment the apartment door-bell rang. The sound froze the blood in my veins: "Who's there?"

Mother's voice answered.

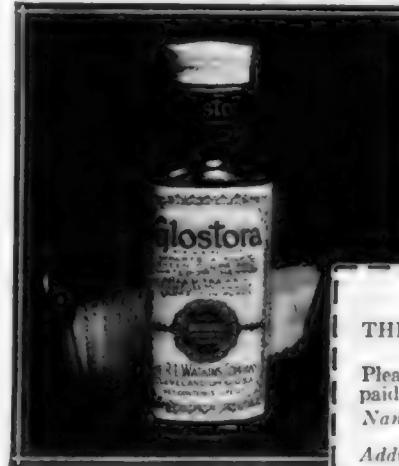
I looked at him helplessly for a second. Then my eyes, running around the room like a pair of scared rabbits, saw the breakfast menu on the floor where Romeo, the



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waiter had shoved it under the door earlier in the morning. It was like manna from heaven. My Sheik could play waiter!

"Just a moment, dear," I cried, stalling for time.

Kicking the desert costume under the divan, I grabbed the breakfast card, and shoved it into the Sheik's hands with a meaning look. He seemed to understand, but I wanted to be sure there'd be no muss. Mother would be a wreck if she knew my party partner had remained in the apartment, especially since Claire wasn't around.

"It's my mother out there," I whispered, "you've got to bluff as a wait—"

"Your mother!" he said. The hoarseness of his whispered exclamation, and the desperate expression that came to his face filled me with an indefinable fear.

An unaccountable suspicion began to fill my mind. My lips tried to frame words but Mother called again.

"I'm coming, mother." I hurried to the door. Out of the corner of my eyes I saw my Sheik looking out of the window, the menu in his hands.

Mother hustled into the apartment in her

funds during this visit, Madame. In a way it was Fate for me to have such a thing happen, for coming here as a waiter I first saw your daughter and Madame knows how much pleasure that has brought me," he said.

My mother is an impulsive, honest sort of person. She suddenly extended her hand to the Count who bent over, and kissed it with courtly grace.

"Count Goushardy, I think you're a real person. I've always admired the spunk of the impoverished Russian nobility in doing such things and the same goes for you. When a man needs work, and takes what he can get, he's a man," she told him. Then turning to me: "Allien I want to present Count Goushardy of Rumania who is to take lunch with us at one at my club if his arrangements permit. Count Goushardy, this is my daughter whom you have expressed a desire to meet."

My Sheik Count turned slightly away from mother as he bowed deeply over my hand in acknowledgment of the introduction. Just as his lips touched my fingers he looked up at me and winked his eye.

Must a Girl Use Her Sex in Business?

SMART SET readers, men and women, were so interested in this question that they flooded the office with letters.

Many of the writers, of course, are girls who are in business, girls to whom the question is vital.

The letters are sincere, honest and enlightening. They are so good that SMART SET will publish many of them in the June number, on sale May 1. You will want to read these letters.

usual impetuous manner, and threw a small package on the divan. She kissed me, asking almost in the same breath where Claire was.

"She went shopping early," I said. I did not dare tell the truth.

SUDDENLY mother became aware of the third person in the room. For a little moment my heart began to sink. The expression on mother's face told me that she was struggling with the idea that the head and back of the Sheik were strangely familiar to her. Suppose she didn't fall for the waiter game?

"Who's that man, Allien?" she demanded.

"The breakfast waiter. I'm just ordering breakfast. Won't you have something, coffee or tea, dear?" I was trying to act and sound natural.

At that moment my Sheik turned around, and bowing with all the grace and elegance of a Parisian head-waiter, said in a voice with a perfect foreign accent: "Bon jour, Madame, permit me to offer you suggestions for petite dejeuner."

He extended the card to mother, but she made no motion to take it. Mother just stood there looking at the Sheik as if he were an apparition. Finally after a few seconds of silence that almost unnerved me she made a soft little incoherent sort of sound, then said: "Heavens! Is it really you Count Goushardy or, am I the victim of trick-playing eyes?"

"Your eyes are as true as they are engaging, Madame." The Count made another grand bow. "I am Count Goushardy."

Go-Go's statement had the effect of a high-powered electrical shock upon me. I stared, almost unbelievably, from my mother to the Count, feeling as if a feather would have knocked me down. Mother's next words came to me in a daze.

"But, here like this, a—" she seemed to gulp over the next word, "waiter."

"I became temporarily embarrassed for

"It is a very great pleasure to be presented to Mam'selle this way," he said, and his voice made me think of those moments on the little iron-wrought balcony when he had told of dreaming about me under African stars.

"You'll be able to lunch with us Count?" from mother.

"I've made arrangements, Madame."

"Fine. Now, will you have some strong black coffee sent up? I—I feel just a little well—the surprise of the thing, you know."

"Of course, the coffee will be up directly," replied my Sheik, leaving the room.

When he shut our door mother said: "Well, I never! Honestly, I never dreamed there was any romance of this kind left in the world. A Count turning waiter and falling in love with you. But, didn't I say he was fascinating? He's got real American gumption for all his grand manner. That comes from his mother. She was a Washington woman, and the Count was at Princeton for two years."

I guess I've got a pretty good sense of humor for I was dying to tell mother what a fine Sheik the Count made. But, I didn't dare shock the poor dear with the truth then.

Fortunately we had our coffee and left before Claire showed up in her party clothes to throw a bomb into the situation. My Sheik was at mother's club on time, faultlessly dressed in afternoon clothes, and I was mighty glad that I knew just who he was underneath all of his polish, and charm. A Sheik if ever there was one! And, mine!

Later when the Count, whom I now call Go-Go all the time, asked Dad for my hand, I told poor dear mother the truth. She took one look at my beautiful engagement ring, and gave a sigh of sudden relief as she said: "Good heavens, Allien, suppose there'd been a fire, or something dreadful and he'd been caught in the apartment! Imagine what would have gotten into those awful newspapers!"

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Playthings of Women

[Continued from page 68]

to sit down and think of all the satisfactory things that woman has achieved.

I was discussing the matter with a world-famed actress, whose blonde curls are as often seen in society gatherings as on the stage. "Women can do anything, achieve anything, if they'll only choose their weapons from the Armory of Eve," she asserted emphatically. "Man has ever been the willing slave of feminine woman. He instinctively recoils from the masculine type, but a regular woman has it over Kings and Princes all the time. Why! if I were given the choice, do you think I'd change with any man? *I should feel my power was being limited.*"

Eve, who upset the world before it was in proper working order, was not a masculine type, that is very certain. Helen of Troy, responsible for indescribable catastrophes was probably afraid of a mouse, and I know they had mice in those days because Aesop's fable says so. Now, these ladies, to mention only two of them, did more than a thousand men could do. Eve has made herself an indelible name in history. Almost everybody has heard of Eve. Helen of Troy had it all her own way. Her name stands as a monument to feminine seductiveness and out of the hundreds of thousands who were massacred in her behalf, not more than one or two individuals can be named, which only goes to show that woman is the axle round which the whole world turns. An age or civilization goes down to posterity as good, bad or indifferent, measured by the feminine standard. Woman colors history or personifies an epoch. The immortal sphinx is a woman and is not the earth on which we live, for that matter—Mother Earth—creative femininity?

It is perfectly thrilling to be certain that you are some relation to Eve and to imagine that you might be some connection of Helen of Troy. I am quite sure that some girls overlook these chances of reflected glory when they say they want to be a man.

There would be no Governments were it not for the women. George Washington certainly was not found in a cherry tree nor did Lloyd George utter his infant cry because a gooseberry bush pricked him. Men are under the domination of women even before they are born. That is only the classical example of women having the first and last word.

PAPA likes to think he rules the home, and Mama loves him to go on thinking. Some wise man, I forget who he was married to, made a remark to the effect that the world would not be tolerable for man if woman ever got to realize her power. Oh! how right he was and what a wonderful woman his wife must have been! These hybrid creatures, the too-frequent masculine women of today do not realize what they are losing. They do not know the heritage they are throwing away.

"Paradise is open at the command of Mothers," runs the Arabian proverb, while another to the effect that "A man has no portion in the love of women when he becomes gray, or when he loses his money," very definitely defines her material heritage, at least; and that, in lands, where woman is supposed to be downtrodden and enslaved! History, tradition, myth, have ever deified woman, in the ideal and in reality. Who would be Mere Man?

I never have any difficulty in getting what I want. You just have to look as



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though you don't expect it and it comes. Men are so selfish! They love to spring surprises and shocks. People are always asking me whether I am not dreadfully handicapped in my journalistic work. They expect me to say that I am, and of course I feel I ought to be, but the truth is that I am not. First of all I would not presume to tackle the Lord of creation on his own ground. Why should I imitate, and imitate badly, the primitive clumsy methods of mere man? I prefer to be a woman because life is made much easier for me. In a crowded train men get up and offer me a seat. If I drop a handkerchief somebody picks it up. I am forgiven all the frailties of human nature. When I am late for an appointment, to man's mind it carries the fragrance of Victorianism. If I forget to turn up at all, one excuse sounds as cute as another! I walk on the inside of the pavement and don't get splashed by the mud. I am not expected to do anything that I don't want to do and all the silly little things that I do want to do, are classified as "charming and womanly."

MEN love feminine women, and for a woman it's the easiest rôle to play. Nobody expects a woman to be clever or truthful, and how seldom anybody believes the truth, even when we speak it. I have told lots of people really startling facts which they might have believed, if I hadn't rolled my eyes and drooped my lower lip, which goes to prove that a woman would make a much better diplomat than man. King-makers and president-makers are found to have been women when the truth becomes known. Even in the Orient, many proud Pashas and at least one King freely admitted that "We are all in the hands of our women."

I can't think how many awkward situations I have gotten out of by merely pretending to be a fool. A man is so ready to believe a woman is a fool, and so delighted when he finds an opportunity for proving his theory. He really makes pitifully poor game.

Even the Bible says that woman must rule in the home or if it does not say exactly that, Solomon was wise enough to hint it pretty broadly.

A man may think he controls his own destiny in public life but he does not. It really matters much more to him what his wife says, than what his fellow workers say. I cannot think why women ever wanted the vote. They will probably be sorry for it one day, when they find that playing cards on the table is not half such an interesting game as chess.

All the great statesmen in history have simply been the tools, the channel for some woman's ambition or brains, and the woman has a double enjoyment. She knows she is controlling all the motives. She knows that if she likes she can make or break a man, a ministry or a country, with a single sweep of her little white hand. At the same time, she has all the satisfaction that the woman's heart can crave, for woman is not born a straightforward creature. Give her the chance of playing two games—a man's bold open one or the woman's instinctively subtle intrigue, and by intrigue I mean merely the urge for excitement and adventure which motivates the dangerously fascinating heroines of romance, and see what she'll do.

Women do not need a vote to govern the country. I have lived a great deal amongst the harems of the East and experience has taught me that the European woman and American woman especially, has much to learn from her secluded sisters. An Egyptian Prince was telling me that ministries are made, and unmade in the harems, that the women exercise a despotic power over the destinies of their country. I have often seen it so too,—a man in the highest office, whose name can make a hundred people

tremble—the hundred, who little realize that behind his success, stands a woman.

I'm the wife of a diplomat, and know all about the part women play in diplomatic and political life. Haven't I seen with my own eyes, and time and time again and enjoyed personally the court paid to the Lady of He-Who-Must-Be-Humored? Ambitious young secretaries, and attachés look for advancement through the good offices of the wives of the all-powerful rather than by direct approach, and it is always the ladies of the diplomatic corps who rule society abroad.

"The Woman in the Case"—what greater compliment to her influence and devastating witchery can any female dream of, than to be eternally held responsible for every act, crime, mistake, or achievement of her man? "Beauty draws us by a single hair" sang the poet, but that was before the time of shingling! I've left my hair long.

I prefer to be a woman because, as such, I can, if I will direct my energies into the proper channel, influence all the men I want. A woman can influence more men than an ancient orator, more men than a general commands in his army. There is no limit to her power, no limit to her capacity for good or evil. She is the mother of her sons—supreme office which the Holy Virgin did not disdain, but coveted. A wife to her husband, muse to the arts, inspiration to the world.

The effect of even one woman consciously exercising her power, would be devastating to civilizations. Most of them are born with it, but unconscious of its possibilities. The great figures of history have all been tools of women. Not a man has risen above mediocrity, not a man has shaken the world with his ideas, or charmed the age with his art, but that a woman has been the fountain from which he drank his inspiration.

I myself can see how easy it must have been and how easy it still can be. I can't understand my friends when they complain of their "hard lot." Privileged creatures, the thinking women at least, have but to sit and let the world move round them. All my motives for appreciating my sex are not as deep as these! The aesthetic pleasure, however, of wearing pretty clothes, counts for much. Oh, vanity! . . . Who would be a man in Paris? Who would deny her femininity in a gown shop? Who would willingly give up the thousand and one little folderols, the silky underclothes, the soft caressing furs and all the panoply of womanhood? Not I!

I HAVE never found that being a woman has interfered with my ambition in life. I have never found it a drawback to achievement, but rather a weapon, which cleverly used, can bring down the trophies of the world. I attribute a good part of my success in life to the fact that I am a woman. As far as my actual journalistic work as Foreign correspondent is concerned, I am practically always the only woman on the field, and if I do manage to put it over the men sometimes, I reckon it is because I am a woman, with all a woman's advantages, and privileges. Life is made easy for a feminine woman. Would I like to be a man? A thousand times, No!

Of all the girls that I know, the majority are anxious to change their condition. Some of my friends are happily married and some are not. The ones who are not happily married are the ones who want to be men, and when I try to probe their reasons it all goes back to the same point that men have a "much better time." I've never had the slightest difficulty in having a "good time," nor in the doing of it have I found it necessary to incur any rancor or masculine ill will. The happy ones are those who realize that they have the best that there is in life.

I can turn men round my finger like

wisps of baby ribbon and it's nothing to boast about, for they love to be turned!

There is only one adult race in the world and that is Woman. Man never grows up. He remains an undeveloped dependent child to the end of his days, dependent upon kindness, upon the direction and will of his womankind. Men boast that their lot is that of freedom and independence; Woman complains that hers is bondage and submission. What fallacy! There is no freedom save the freedom of mind. There is no independence save utter self-containedness, and there is no possibility of attaining either quality unless the subject is grown up. I always feel superior to man in that respect. I know I am grown up and I know they never will be. My mind is freer to soar, because woman is more spiritual and less material than man. I am gloriously independent because I can darn my own stockings—sew on my own buttons—perform a hundred and one little rites which confound the ignorance of mere man.

Put a woman on a desert island. Her resourcefulness will win her through. I'll warrant she will even create the latest fashions out of palm leaves and flowers, while a man, in less than a week would become a disreputable looking object. I should hate to have to shave every day under the ban of cultivating a scrubby growth. I don't think it can be a bit nice to be a man. Most of them are constitutionally ugly and even when they are not, few people trust, even though many may think they love, a handsome man.

A WOMAN has a thousand more opportunities than any man. With gentleness and a word of graciousness she can achieve what no man can. She is not called upon to betray her weakness. She is not called upon to pit herself in bodily strength against one stronger. She wins through, not on what she does, but on what she doesn't do. If they only realized it, a woman's clever rôle is—to be. Man is naturally an aggressive selfish animal. Woman needn't know, or can pretend not to know. A hundred men in eager vanity will compete to give her the benefit of their "wise experience." Their experience is often so immature, and often so short-sighted, that the average woman can only marvel at her God-given instinct.

I wouldn't be a man because they are denied the exquisite emotions enjoyed, or suffered by us. They love on the major chord of tempestuous affection, but to every woman is reserved the heart wringing minor love song of all the ages.

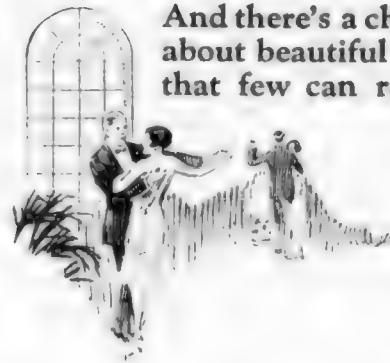
I've read all kinds of curious scientific statements that certain animals see forms and things veiled from our gaze. I think that women are like that. They see, feel, think, suffer, enjoy, to a degree unknown to the coarser masculine type. Mentally a woman is more alert. Men call it instinct. Morally a woman is more sensitive and has a classically greater capacity for emotion. Everything means more to her. A beautiful flower is more beautiful; magnificent scenery more magnificent; affection more sweet; romance more touching. As a woman I ache under the pleasure of being dominated by an emotion. I have asked lots of men about the matter but they don't even understand what I am trying to say.

I think that women are more refined. Their senses are more acute and the "sixth sense" is rarely ever lacking. I can't think of a single man I would change places with. Honor and glory may be theirs in a greater degree. The world may admire their colossal gifts, their marvellous capacities for mechanical or mathematical understanding but give me every time the gentle joys, the secret satisfaction, the knowledge of life and death, which is the heritage of all women; the conviction of unlimited power, the pride of sex, inestimably more precious than what passes



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for the special prerogatives of man. I prefer to be a woman and I wouldn't be a man because to my sex belongs the privilege of construction. Man is a destructive creature. Wars, revolutions, murder and massacres fall to his lot, or rather he grasps them all with both hands. From his brains are born the implements of death. His mind conceives and seeks the aid of the Frankensteinian monster of destruction, where his own material interests are involved. Strikes and social troubles are all his making.

THE outstanding masculine figures of history have all been geniuses who have won their laurels in connection with the destruction of existing regimes. Confounding the destructive influence of these classical Colossi, stand out the famous feminine personalities, espousing the cause of construction and progress. Cornelia, the mother whose children were more precious than jewels; and so through the ages, to the days of

Florence Nightingale, and Nurse Cavell; to the very women who banded themselves together in protest the other day against the destructive evils of strikes. If I were to be reborn a man I should inevitably join the ranks of destruction and forfeit the heritage of woman.

I am happy as a woman. Life is not without its difficulties or its problems, but I do think that a woman who will, can find more compensations for her lot than any man. I am grateful to men because they smooth my path. I am appreciative of the many little services that go to make my well-being as a woman. I can't understand anybody wanting to be reborn a man. A woman has the world at her feet whether as mother, wife or mistress.

Woman conquers Life by her very knowledge of it, and her understanding, and woman conquers Death by the continuation and regeneration of the very essence of her being, which lives in the child she bears.

WHAT is there about a so-called bad woman that attracts good men? After you have read my story in June SMART SET you'll be inclined to think I ought to know if anyone does, but I'm still honestly unable to say whether or not Men Prefer Wicked Women.

I Lost My Head

[Continued from page 73]

house and Harry had introduced me as "Meet the future Mrs. Clemons, Paul, old kid. Rita's my girl, so save your jack for a nice wedding present."

"I've seen stars out Hollywood way that couldn't stand a chance next to Rita here. You sure have good taste," Paul had said. But I hardly paid any attention to them, my thoughts were too busy with the one person in all the world who mattered to me now.

Duke Harlan was giving all these other women the slip. I went over this thought in my mind. I asked Paul lots of questions, found out all I could about Duke Harlan's plans and then I worked out my scheme.

The next night I wore my best party dress to work.

I fixed it up with Nellie to slip away early. As soon as Duke Harlan came on I rushed to the lockers, got into my good dress and was out of the theater in a flash. I ran towards Sixth Avenue looking for a parked car with Paul Clemons at the wheel. When I caught sight of him I trembled all over. Though I had worked out my plan, rehearsed it over and over in my mind, now that it came to actually putting it over, I got cold feet.

What I intended to do was to get in the car and be sitting there when Duke Harlan came. Then I would pretend to be surprised, frightened at having gotten into the wrong machine and lost my aunt after the theater. He would have to offer to drive me home, for I would mention I had no money with me. Then I would have those precious minutes with him riding up town. It would be my one perfect memory for the rest of my life, no matter what happened to me. Of course in my party dress and new coat he would think me some society girl. My address too—the fashionable apartment where I lived in the basement. Oh, I had worked out every detail, my plan had no flaw; and yet here I stood, shivering with fear, afraid to carry it out.

It was a closed car and the street was fairly quiet. I could not keep standing there much longer. I was conspicuous. Suddenly I regained my courage. Luck was

with me. Paul got out of the car and went into the cigar store right on the corner. When he came back I was huddled deep in the back seat, almost out of sight. I had not gotten in a minute too soon; for before my heart had stopped its wild beating I saw Duke Harlan just outside the car. He was giving his orders to Paul. The door opened. He was inside. We had started before he noticed I was there.

"Oh, dear!" I gave a little cry as if I were frightened. "This is my car, isn't it?"

"I think not." He spoke politely, but without any real friendliness.

We were speeding up Sixth Avenue. The roar of the L over our heads nearly drowned out what I said. "I was to meet my aunt in her car. There were so many machines parked along the street and such a rush. Is it possible I'm the one who has made the mistake?"

I saw that he believed my story, that my air of distress had disarmed him. He could not possibly suspect that this was a plot of mine, only to be with him. I suggested that I get out and find a taxi, only I had no money with me.

"I'll be glad to drop you off, wherever you live," he said in a more cordial tone. I could hardly hide the exultation that swept over me. I was afraid he would hear the mad pounding of my heart and that it would betray me. I had won, accomplished my purpose. I was alone with him, close beside him. My coat was brushing against him, my sleeve touched his arm. He was talking just to me. I was no longer in the dull, everyday world of subways and balcony aisles and payments on clothes and Harry Clemons. I was in a glittering, golden heaven. I was in ecstasy, and for me life could never be quite so dreary and hard again. I was riding up through Central Park with Duke Harlan.

I LEANED back, too happy to speak, not daring to, for fear my trembling voice would give me away.

"You haven't told me where you live," he said kindly.

I did not want this to end. If it could only go on, just a little longer. Now that I had done what I had set out to do I was

not satisfied. I wanted more, a deeper glimpse into Paradise. I sighed.

"I'm so disappointed. There was going to be a party at a cabaret. If I only knew where; but I'm a stranger here." I had to make my story convincing. I saw that he had looked at me in the light from the passing lamp posts and his manner became more kind when he saw my distress. "I'm afraid no one will be back home for hours."

"I see. You're a trifle lonely and maybe hungry too?" I dug my nails into the palms of my hands to hold on to myself, his smile moved me so. "Well, my dear young lady, as a matter of fact I'm sort of a stranger in New York too." I thought of those applauding thousands from whom he had just come. "And to be quite frank I'm hungry and thirsty. I've a bad habit of eating before I go to bed. Would you care to join me in having a bite?"

"Very much," I said.

"Fine. We'll go to Luben's then." He gave his orders through the speaking tube and the car swerved out through the Seventy Second Street entrance to the Park.

I CANNOT describe those next two hours. They were too wonderful. The crowded restaurant, filled with people who seemed to know Duke. Theatrical people, of course. He seemed to hate the publicity that dogged him and escaped with me to a corner table. Here he turned his back on the room and devoted himself only to me.

I had told him my name was Rita and where I lived, with that imaginary aunt, and that I came from Philadelphia. That was safe enough as I had been down to the Sesqui and knew a little about it.

"What a cute kid you are, Rita!"

I flushed crimson at his praise. That flask must have warmed him too, broken down his stiffness. He talked on, growing more personal, more friendly all the time. I did not care about anything in the world but him. I would have died for him gladly. When he reached across the table and took my hand, I nearly fainted with happiness.

He asked me how old I was, how long I was staying in New York. His eyes burned into mine. "Rita, do you know you're lovely? You like me a little too, don't you?"

He frightened me, but he made me whisper back, "Oh, yes, I like you."

"You're adorable. Listen, honey, you don't know by any chance who I am, do you?"

I shook my head, murmured something vague about his reminding me of someone I'd seen.

"You're so darn sweet and unspoiled. They broke the mold when you were made, Rita. I've never met a kid like you, honestly. With all the others it's gimme or flinging themselves at your head; not because they really give a hang about you, but—" He was rambling on, refilling his glass. "I'm fed up with all of it, the bootlicking and the graft, the kowtowing, once you're a success. But you, why you don't even know a thing about me. You like me just because you do, don't you, honey?"

"Yes, that's right." And this time I spoke the truth.

He came over and sat beside me on the leather seat. Like faces in a blurred mist I could see men and women, boys and girls, noisy, laughing, eating and drinking. A blonde youngster was sitting on a table thrumming a uke, while her gang laughed and egged her on. How happy they all were! But I wasn't paying much attention to them. Duke Harlan had put his arm about me and drawn me to him. I was trembling with joy.

"Gee, honey, you're a pretty little thing! Those black eyes of yours say things to me." If I could only tell him all my eyes

They Thought I Was Trying to be Funny —



Until I Started to Play — Then I Gave Them the Surprise of Their Lives

THE crowd sat spellbound. Harry had just played the violin—beautifully. With mock dignity I arose.

"With your kind permission," I announced, "I shall now charm you with a piano recital."

Everyone snickered. They were sure I couldn't play a note. "Does he really play?" one girl asked. "Yes," Phil laughed, "he plays the Victrola—beautifully!"

With studied clumsiness, I fell over the piano stool. Then I proceeded to pick out "Chop Sticks" with one finger! The crowd laughed. This was the dramatic moment for my surprise. Dropping the mask of the clown, I struck the first sweet chords of Wagner's lovely "The Evening Star" from "Tannhauser."

The laughter died on their lips. The magic of my music cast a spell over everyone. As I played on with complete confidence I forgot the room—the people—everything. I was alone—lost in the sheer beauty of the immortal master's tender melodies.

The Thrill of My Life

When the last notes had faded away, there was a roar of applause. Then came questions and congratulations from my dumbfounded friends—"How long have you been playing?"—"Who was your teacher?"—"Where did you learn?"

"I know it is hard to believe," I replied, "but I learned at home—and without a teacher!"

Then I told them the whole story.

"I have always wanted to play the piano. But I

never had a chance to take lessons. Then one day I saw an interesting ad. It told about a new, easy way of learning music—right at home—without a teacher. I sent for the Free Demonstration Lesson and Booklet.

"When they arrived, I was amazed to see how easy playing the piano really was. I decided that I would send for the course

and practice secretly. Then I could surprise you all.

Just a Few Minutes a Day

"The course was as fascinating as a new game. I enjoyed every minute of it. I was playing real tunes from the start, *by note*. Reading music was as easy as A-B-C! No weary scales, no monotonous exercises, no tiresome hours of practicing. Soon I could play jazz, ballads, classical music—all with equal ease."

You, too, can learn to play your favorite instrument by this easy "at home" method that has taught almost half a million people. There's nothing marvelous about it. It's just a common sense practical method—so simple you don't have to know the slightest thing about music. You find your progress amazingly rapid because every step is clear and easy to understand. Just pick out the instrument you want to play. The U. S. School of Music does the rest. And its cost averages just a few cents a day!

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Our illustrated free book and free demonstration lesson explain all about this remarkable method. They prove how anyone can learn to play his favorite instrument in almost no time.

If you really want to learn to play—take this opportunity to make your dreams come true. Sign the coupon below. Instruments supplied when needed, cash or credit. U. S. School of Music, 4275 Brunswick Bldg., New York.

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Please send me your free book, "Music Lessons in Your Own Home," with introduction by Dr. Frank Crane, Demonstration Lesson and particulars of your Special Offer. I am interested in the following course:

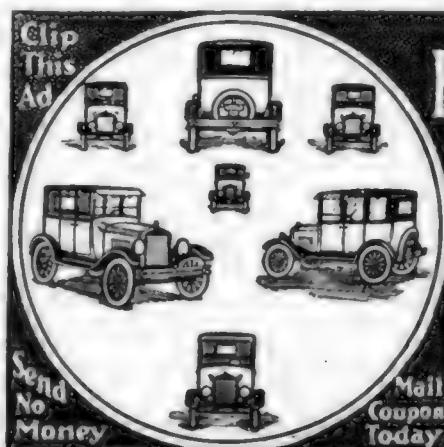
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Address.

City. State.

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"I Want Extra Beauty"

Please ask me for it

By Edna Wallace Hopper

Is there a girl who reads this who doesn't want added beauty? Or an older woman who doesn't crave new youth? If not, let me send you at my cost the best helps I have found in 40 years of searching. They made me a famous beauty, they have kept my youth. I owe all I am to the great French scientists who perfected these matchless helps.

Today I offer to send you—free—a sample of my Youth Cream. Also my Beauty Book. This to present to all womankind the best helps science brought to me.

My Youth Cream is no ordinary cream. It combines some of the best helps I have found in all my searching. Two of them are products of lemon and strawberry. But other great helps are embodied.

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wanted to say, how long, how deeply I had loved him. But if he knew the truth he would leave me. I was sure of that.

"Listen, kid," he whispered, holding me close, "life's so darn short, why spend it denying ourselves the good things that come our way? The things we want. You understand me, don't you? I can see it in those eyes of yours. That's what made me ask you not to go home in the first place. Let's get out of this rowdy dump and go some place where it's quiet and we can talk. A friend of mine's let me have his studio while I'm in town. It's a peach of a place, near the Park. Will you come?"

I DID not need to answer him. He could see that I would go, from the way the hot color rushed up into my cheeks.

He paid the check and we started for the door. When I had come in I had pulled my coat collar way up about my face so that Paul Clemons would not see or recognize me; but now as I came out I was in such a daze of joy I had forgotten all about Harry's brother. When it was too late I saw that he had recognized me, fairly gaped when he saw Duke Harlan help me into the car.

"The Studio," he called out.

The car started off, rather slowly, I thought. I was not very clear in my mind as to what was going to happen. All I knew or cared was that I was with Duke Harlan—that his arms were hard about me, that he was half asleep, with his head against my shoulder. I closed my eyes and held him close. This could not be true. It was a dream. I would wake up soon and find it had not happened at all. Once he mumbled. "Your aunt, kid? What about her?" He did not even listen to what I said in reply, but drifted off again into a doze. How handsome he was! At last my fingers touched that crisp, wavy hair I had loved so long. I caressed his cheek, his neck. I held him close.

I heard him say, "You love me. I can feel it. You're coming to the Studio with me, Rita? You want to come?"

"Yes, yes," I whispered. "I do. I do."

I did not know or care what I was saying. I had forgotten everything I had ever been taught, everything about right and wrong. All I knew was that I was with him. Did anything else matter?

"Gee, you're a sweet kid!" he said.

The car had stopped abruptly. I had not paid any attention to where we were going; but suddenly Paul Clemons was there holding open the door of the car. His hand reached in and he fairly jerked me out onto the sidewalk. "Get in the house there where you belong," he said in a low, harsh voice. "Harlan's pi-eyed and you're no better. I guess you've forgotten you're my brother's girl."

With that he was back on the driver's seat, the door of the car slammed shut and the machine drove off. I swayed dizzily, too surprised to make a sound, and when I looked around I saw I was right in front of my own apartment.

At first I was wild with rage at Paul Clemons for daring to butt in like that in my affairs; but after a few minutes I began to think of Harry and I was scared. Suppose Paul told. I slipped quietly down to my place and into bed, but I could not get to sleep. I kept thinking over all that had happened that night, and then I began to be kind of glad Paul had not let me go to that Studio.

The next day I was in a kind of daze, so much so that my mother asked me if I was feeling well. "You didn't come home with Harry last night, like always," she said. "He was so angry. He walked up and down in his room. We hear him, your papa and me. I tell you, Rita, you better marry him, before you lose him."

If only I could have told things to my mother; but I knew she would not understand, that she would be horrified and pray for me, that was all. I had no one else I could go to. Nina and Marie were too young. I went off to work, and as the hours passed and I saw Duke Harlan on the stage, all the madness of the night before, which I had been trying to fight down, swept over me again. I loved him so. I could not do without him. Could he do without me? Did he want me, miss me, wonder where I had gone? I sent a note to him back stage.

"If you want to see me again tonight meet me in the lobby of the Astor at eleven. If you are not there, that will be all." I signed it "Rita."

I could hardly hold on to myself through those long hours till closing time. Would he come? Would he be there? If he was not, what should I do? How could I bear it? Would he know who the note was from? He knew so many women. Perhaps I should have made things more clear.

But he was there. When I saw him my legs nearly gave way under me and I leaned against the wall.

"What happened to you last night, kid? Why did you beat it? Scared, were you?"

"I thought I'd better go home."

"Maybe you were right." He looked down into my eyes. "Do you think you were?"

I knew I blushed. "I don't know," I whispered.

He took my arm and lead me to the door. A panic seized me. Paul Clemons must not see me with Duke again. "Let's take a taxi," I said. "I don't want your chauffeur to see me too often."

"Righto. Some wise little baby, aren't you?" He gave me a keen look and we went through the lobby and out the Forty-fifth Street side. In the taxi he said, "You know, you've got me going, Rita. I can't quite make you out. Now tell me something about yourself."

I shivered a little. "No. Let's just be ourselves. The rest doesn't matter."

"That suits me too, honey. The hour is enough. You're a pagan too, then?" and he kissed me.

The studio was a large, high vaulted room, with a big sloping window. There was a fire burning and he made me take off my coat and curl up in a corner while he mixed cocktails in a shaker. I waited impatiently till he had finished.

"Swallow that, my little black-eyed gypsy. You don't know how much I like you. I almost wish I didn't like you quite so much." He tuned in the big radio and kicked back the rug. "Let's dance. What do you say? That drink. How was it? Pretty good? But you won't feel any kick till you've had a couple. Come on now, Rita, to our better friendship!"

I HAD to drink that toast. We danced in after that and it was like being in heaven, floating there in Duke's arms, but presently he turned off the radio and I found myself back in my corner.

"I'm no rotter. Women don't get me as a rule," Duke said. "But you, what is it about you? You rouse a kind of devil in me, and yet I am sorry for you. I want to let you go; but I want to keep you too."

"What'll I do?" His hands hurt me as they gripped my arm. "I'm almost sorry I met you. I guess it wasn't a good day for you when you made that mistake and got into my car last night."

I felt I had to tell him the truth. "It wasn't a mistake. I knew it was your car. I went there on purpose."

A sort of ugly look came into his eyes. "You knew who I was all along then?"

"How else could I have sent you a note?"

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He burst out into a loud laugh. "Well, if that don't beat all. I hand it to you, kid, you put it over on me."

Then I heard his voice close to my ear, low and hurried. "I guess you're a pretty wise kid, and know what you're about all right; but remember, I don't ever intend or want to marry you. You understand that?"

His words roused me from the dream of happiness in which I was sinking. The look in my eyes as he said that must have touched something in him, for he said, "You see Rita, I'm Duke Harlan. I'm in pictures. It would hurt my prestige and kill my popularity on the screen if I married; even if I wanted to."

THE fire was burning low and the room was lighted by its dull red glow. I closed my eyes dreamily but the sound of the door bell ringing brought me back to this world. Duke swore softly to himself. "Who the devil can that be? People use this place as a kind of a night club. Drop in at all hours. Stay here, honey, I'll get rid of whoever it is."

Then I heard men's voices, loud and angry. "You're crazy. There's no girl here," I heard Duke say.

"I tell you she's here, you rotten cad! She's here and I know it. Get out of my way or I'll knock your block off. You tried to get her here last night too."

There was something horribly familiar about that voice. I rushed to the curtains and peeped through. There before me, facing Duke, his face livid with rage was Harry Clemmons. I nearly screamed. And then I saw that Harry had a pistol in his hand, that same one I had seen him polishing so often. He raised it till it was on a level with Duke's heart.

"I'm going to kill you on account of last night, you—"

I could see Duke's face go very white. "So she told you, did she? What is this, a frame up? What's your game, blackmail?"

"I'll show you what it is. In just one more minute I'm going to let some living daylight into those black guts of yours." Harry's face was like a madman's. Something seemed to snap inside me. I knew Harry was going to shoot Duke and I had only one idea, to save him. I threw myself in front of Duke at the sharp report of the pistol. There was the smell of powder, smoke, a gray, whirling blindness and a pain that bit through the faintness. I called out Duke's name as I felt myself slipping to the floor. I had been shot. There was blood on my hands, where they clutched at my breast; but above the agony, above the numbing, cold red mist that came over me was the thought that I had saved Duke Harlan.

When I regained consciousness I was in a hospital. There was a screen about my narrow white cot, cutting it off from the rest of the ward. I heard a doctor say to the white capped nurse. "It's touch and go. Her youth's in her favor. We may be able to pull her through."

Slowly, slowly I crawled back to life. After a day or so some roses came, red roses. There was no card with them, but I was sure they must come from Duke Harlan. Those roses helped me get better, but I wondered why he did not write, or come to see me. I tried to be contented with those flowers that came regularly every other day. Duke was so busy, so hounded by publicity. Probably he did not want

to drag my name into any sort of scandal.

I almost forgave Harry Clemmons for what he had done. My mother told me that he was nearly crazy with grief when that bullet had struck me. He had been arrested; but in some way the case had been hushed up and Harry discharged. The movie actor could not afford to get mixed up in such a case. And then I learned two weeks later that the day after my accident Duke Harlan had beat it straight back to Hollywood, so as not to be involved. My mother was furious at him. To her he was entirely to blame for all that had happened.

Then those roses could not have been from Duke Harlan. He had gone off, not caring if I lived or died. In all those days of suffering there had been not a word from him. It had been the thought that the flowers were a wordless message that had given me the courage to go on living; but now, what was there to go on for?

In my grief and bitterness I could see it all. He thought it was a blackmail game and hated me. At first I felt I ought to write to him and try to explain; but some instinct warned me that I meant nothing to Duke Harlan, that to him I was just one of many such episodes. He might not even remember my name.

After I was discharged from the hospital I went home. Everyone had been so good to me. There was a bunch of red roses in my room.

"Harry brought them for you, Rita," my mother told me.

SO HARRY had been the one who had sent me those flowers. Harry's roses had brought me back. When I saw him my heart was touched. He seemed years older, drawn and haggard. He sank down on his knees before me and I saw him shake with sobs, as he buried his face in my lap. Suffering had taught me pity and understanding.

"I never will blame you, Rita," he said later, "You were too young to realize what you were doing and that rotten beast tried to take advantage of it. He was wise to clear out of New York when he did, and it'll be many a day before he'll dare come back again. But it jolted me up too. It made me sick of being just a doorman. I wanted to do more for you, Rita, be able to get you the things you like, silk stockings and fur coats and the rest of it. I looked up my old overseas Captain and he's got me a real job selling tractors. There's money in it, and I'm making good already; so that maybe, later on, we can get married after all."

You can guess the rest. I am going to marry Harry Clemmons. I have grown to care for him. Maybe it is not the wild sort of feeling I had for Duke Harlan; but it is sound and true and real and will last.

I never go to see a Duke Harlan picture, for I want to forget all that. Even now it is almost as if it had happened to some one else, not to me. In last night's paper there was a picture of Duke Harlan and the report of his engagement to some new leading lady. It did not bother me at all. I have burned all the pictures of him and the clippings that I had collected. Instead I have a photograph of Harry in his uniform on my bureau. I like to look at it. It gives me a safe, wholesome feeling of quiet content. I have had my wild romance and cannot help feel that, though it brought me misery and pain, I am the better for it. Because of my experience with Duke Harlan I will make Harry a better wife, and make my marriage a real success.

IS THERE ever any excuse for a wife who demands so much of her husband that he has to earn more and more and more to keep her satisfied? Before you say "No" so emphatically read my story in June SMART SET and perhaps you'll agree that I'm justified in being "A Gold-digger Wife."



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By LUCILLE YOUNG

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Only a Cigarette Girl

[Continued from page 77]

face and voice suddenly hardening. Terror swept over me. My heart sank down and down as he went on: "Surf Island is Steven Wainwright's camp."

"Wainwright, Wainwright! That is the name Gomez found out. Si, si, you are Wainwright. You keep my sister on—"

"You lie. I am not Wainwright. I am Schuyler Briggs," snapped Schuyler, his words like so many rifle shots.

Pedro's hand flashed to his knife. There was a look of murder in his blazing eyes. "You call me liar. I'll kill you—"

But I sprang between them. Pedro stopped his mad rush for a moment, his knife brandished over his head. I took advantage of this moment: "This gentleman is Mr. Briggs."

"Did you spend a night with Wainwright on Surf Island, Nunciata?" demanded Schuyler, ignoring Pedro and his upraised knife.

"YES, but I can explain," I answered. My voice faltered at the terrible look that came swiftly upon his face.

"That's explanation enough!" he said in a voice that told me what had happened in his heart.

"What is this? He is not Wainwright?" insisted Pedro, advancing again.

"No," I said, shaking my head.

"You'll find Wainwright on that white yacht, El Bandelero, off our starboard. His 'owner's aboard' flag is up," said Schuyler. His words were whip lashes across my face.

Dazedly I glanced beyond the starboard bow. I saw El Bandelero. So did Pedro. He narrowed his black eyes and curled his lips. Gripping the knife at his waist he said. "Then I go get him," and he ran down the ladder with a horrible Spanish oath.

Schuyler and I faced each other for a moment. I should have known by the cold lights peering out of his eyes and the set of his jaw that appealing to him would be futile. He gave the impression of a man turned to stone, but, I was desperate with the fear that Pedro would kill a man who had not really harmed me the way my brother believed he had.

"Perhaps you think you've got a right to believe the worst about me now. But, you haven't. I swear it! I'll prove it if only you'll give me a chance. Please, won't you stop Pedro before it's too late. He may kill Stephen Wainwright!"

"You want me to save your lover, eh? Well, I hope to God Pedro kills him—"

"Santa Maria! It is not that! But, Pedro must not be a murderer. He must not," I screamed, feeling faint at the very idea. "Steven Wainwright has not wronged me. It would be horrible for my brother to kill an innocent man!"

"Then you'd better stop him yourself," Schuyler said.

"Dios Mio!" I sobbed, knowing Steven Wainwright's life was in my hands, and knowing, too, that my effort to save him would only damn me in Schuyler Briggs' heart.

Pedro was shoving off in his rowboat for El Bandelero. Without a moment's hesitation I dashed down the ladder. Making a leap for the little boat I missed it, and splashed into Biscayne Bay.

Climbing out of the water upon the ladder platform I took another rowboat made fast there and pulled away in pursuit of Pedro. He had a headway of at least twenty yards, and being stronger than I and an expert oarsman he rapidly increased his lead. But, I stuck to my oars, driven to desperation at

the thought that he would do Wainwright some terrible harm unless I stopped him.

I tried to speed up my strokes. With each effort my arms felt as if they were being pulled from their sockets. The physical strain became almost unbearable torture. Perhaps if my heart had been high and brave then I might have forced my exhausted muscles into a last bursting effort. But Schuyler's denunciation had fallen upon me like so many ruthless blows, breaking my heart, bowing my spirit, and sucking away all courage.

The oars slipped from my burning hands time and time again. I could barely make the boat move and Pedro, Madre de Dios! He was running up El Bandelero's ladder two steps at a time.

I shouted, hoping to attract somebody's attention aboard the Wainwright yacht. At the sound of my voice Pedro turned and brandished his knife at me. The sinking sun struck it, and the glitter of the blade blinded me for a moment. When I recovered my sight I saw two men in white sailor togs rushing down the deck upon my brother.

"He's going to kill Mr. Wainwright! Stop him! Hold him!" I screamed, bending over the oars again.

My eyes suddenly filled with a blurry vision of Pedro and the sailors clashing. I dared not keep my glances upon them. But, the sound of a voice forced my eyes to El Bandelero's deck. Steven Wainwright, towering like a giant above the struggling men, was taking a hand!

My boat banged into the yacht and without waiting to make it fast I ran up the ladder.

When I reached the deck the fighters had separated. Pedro was lying on the deck, his knife beside him. His shirt front was rapidly turning red. A sailor bent over him with an upraised dagger. Steven Wainwright was reaching out to ward off the blow. The other sailor was holding a crimson right hand.

I darted at the sailor whose knife menaced my prostrate brother. After all Pedro was my own flesh and blood. I could not see him knifed to death before my face!

But I would have been too late to save him. It was Steven Wainwright who caught the infuriated sailor, and flung him backwards against the railing.

Girls of violent natures like my own are braver before the sight of blood than most of their sex. Pedro's condition did not make me feel faint, or ill. I bent over him quickly and tore away his reddening shirt. The wound was ugly but not deep nor serious. I told Wainwright to get some bandages.

PEDRO raised up at the sound of my voice. A curse came from his lips. He tried to strike me. "You're the cause of all this. I'll kill you for it."

But his strength had been sucked away with the loss of blood, and he fell back upon the deck raving and cursing.

"Go into the salon, Nunciata. I'll fix him up and shoot him ashore to a hospital at once. He needs stitching," said Steven Wainwright.

Realizing it would be best to get out of Pedro's sight I obeyed. In the salon I stood and looked across at a white ship that seemed to be turning black before my gaze. Only a short time before that yacht Desmonda had been the ship of my dreams. No longer was it a dream ship. Now it was a ship of black and bitter despair.

Vaguely, I saw people moving about the Desmonda's deck. One of them was Schuy-

ler Briggs. He was probably cursing and damning me as men have always cursed and damned the women they think have deceived them in love.

A wave of desperation swept over me. Life as it had turned out for me, was like some sneering, mocking thing that had cunningly and cruelly baited me with golden promises, then trapped me in ugly realities. My home was closed to me. People were gossiping about me behind my back. Schuyler Briggs had lost faith in me. There was no one to whom I could turn in my hour of greatest need.

I began to sob. Almost at the same moment Steven Wainwright came upon me.

"I've sent him to a hospital, Nunciata! Why! you're crying," he exclaimed. "I'm so sorry. Isn't there something I can do. I'm not asking for any explanation of what's happened, dear. I only want to help you."

"Everything's ruined. I just want to die."

HE TOOK me in his arms before I could protest, or escape. "Nunciata," he said, "You are not one to speak of Death. You are all of Life, and Life waits for you, for us in those islands I told you about. Think, Nunciata, of what is there for you, and for me in those lovers' hiding places of the far Eastern seas. There is beauty, forgetfulness of all that is ugly, peace. We can begin again for we will have left all the world behind us.

"Oh! Nunciata, come with me now. We need not wait an hour. El Bandelero is ready. Please, say you'll come with me."

It was not so much his words, or his promises that tempted me then. Deep in my broken heart I knew that no matter if I went to the ends of the earth I could never find surcease from the agonizing fact that I had lost the one beautiful chance of romance Life had sent me, and would never send again. Neither Stephen Wainwright, nor any other man could ever make me forget Schuyler Briggs and the dreams he had fashioned in my heart only to smash them into bits.

My temptation came solely from the thought of the barren, bitter years that stretched ahead. I knew I could never endure them in Miami where all things would be memories. I would have to go away. But how could I? I had no money, no friends to ask for help.

"Will you start right now?" I faltered, afraid my nerve would fail me if we did not go at once.

"We'll be under way in half an hour. I won't even wait for the sailor I sent ashore with your brother," he answered. He led me down a corridor.

"Here, Nunciata, this is the room I fixed up, hoping you'd change your mind. You'll find the closet filled with clothes I bought today in the event you went with me."

He led me into the room as if I were blind, and truly I was for I could only grope my way uncertainly to the bed, and slump across it. He stood over me for a moment, and I shuddered at the look in the black eyes that had once cast such a spell over me. Seeing me shuddering, he stooped to kiss me.

"Nunciata, I am going to make you love me. For I shall give you the happiness you have so vainly sought," he said and went out of the room.

I lay unmoved on the bed. During those awful moments I felt incapable of everything except suffering. I could not see the luxurious furniture; every bit of space was filled with a thousand visions of a sneering, condemning Schuyler Briggs. I covered my eyes to shut out these visions.

Suddenly I heard a thrumming sound. I understood. El Bandelero's engines were coming into life! The thrumming of those engines magically became a Great Voice speaking through my soul, a Voice that was

like God forbidding the mad thing I had decided to do.

I staggered to my feet, in obedience to that Voice. Rushing to the door I determined to open it and flee from El Bandelero and Wainwright before it was too late.

A violent twist of the knob failed to open the door. Seized by a swiftly rising suspicion, I tried again. But, without success. I was locked in. Wainwright would never let me go willingly. He meant to keep me at any cost. That was the answer to the locked door. I must find my own means of escape.

The window! It offered the only possible means of escape. It was unlocked. The Bay, black and murmurous in the deepening shadows, lay five feet or more beneath the sill. A second look and I made my decision. Better the Bay than what was in store for me aboard El Bandelero. A leap would be the only way.

I took off my things and in the closet that Wainwright had filled with beautiful clothes, I found a maroon swimming suit. Pulling on the swimming togs I went back to the window, and climbing through let myself splash overboard as softly as possible.

For a mad moment, as the waters swirled about me, I thought of sinking down and down to a death that might prove kinder than life. But, even hopeless love such as I still bore toward Schuyler Briggs, is stronger than all other things. It was strong enough to drive away the desire for death, and send me swimming toward the Desmonda whose lights were gleaming through the tropic night like vari-colored jewels. The decks echoed with voices, and gay music.

I swam on until I was under the lee of the yacht's hull. Grasping a rudder chain I clung to it. Suddenly it seemed as if Schuyler Briggs were speaking right over me in a reckless sort of voice.

"Have 'nother drink, Jack, old top. Feel like getting good and tight myself t'night. Here we go!"

"Mighty potent, Schuyler," answered a man's voice.

"I'll say, and from now on they're all going to be potent to me. I'm beginning to see I've been all wrong about things. Imagine my never letting go like you fellows, and kicking the traces over."

"WHAT'S struck you, old man? Had a fight with some woman?"

I strained my ears to catch his reply.

"Woman? Bah! There's not one really worth fighting with, or for. Steven Wainwright's got the right dope. He plays 'em for what he can get out of 'em."

"Right-o! Guess you heard about his latest affair . . . Sort of got him in wrong with some people. It was a little nervy running off from his guests last night with a cigarette girl, and fetching up on his island. But, she was some girl. I've seen her about the Conquistador."

"Heard all about it just now from Evelyn Vanderpool. Wainwright was a little brazen but, he'll get away with it. Damn him, anyway."

My hold on the rudder chain loosened. It's a wonder I didn't drown, but such a Fate was not written down for me. I was destined to live, and suffer the torture of a broken heart, and smashed dreams. I grabbed the chain again and hung on thinking bitterly of everything that had happened to cheat Schuyler and me of the happiness we had hoped for and I bitterly berated myself as the one to blame for everything. I had been blinded by false glitter, and lured by yearnings that I should have conquered.

I managed to cling to the chain until everybody aboard the Desmonda was at dinner. Then I sneaked up the port ladder, and made my way to a room whose door was partially open. I found some clothes, and got into them very hurriedly. . . . Music and voices from the dining salon

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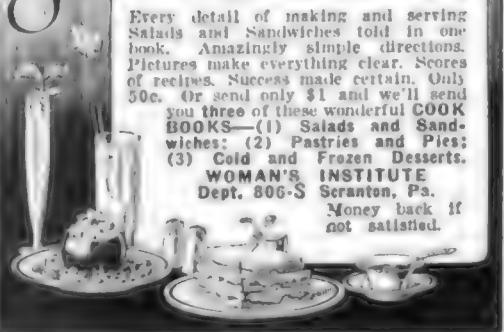
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were ringing in my ears as I went down the ladder, and taking a small boat, pulled forlornly for Miami.

I was on the verge of collapse when I tied up at a dock, but being penniless I was forced to walk to my little hotel. Once inside the room I flung myself across the bed, and a merciful blankness enveloped me.

Two days crawled tortuously by. On the morning of the third day there was a knock at my door. I answered it with apprehension. The sight of my Aunt Conchita startled me. She said she had come on from Key West to take care of my father. He had been ill since the day he drove me away from home. "You must come with me, Nunciata," she said: "His fever continues because he worries about you. His heart has changed."

Somehow I aroused the strength and courage to go to my father's house. There I found him ill, and Pedro moaning and cursing in bed with six stitches in his side.

My Aunt Conchita said my father would never be himself again.

"He's kept everything to himself so much his thinking and thinking has worn his mind and body out. He will never work again, Nunciata," she said, as we sat in our little dingy parlor.

I WAS so numb from that gnawing feeling in my heart that I only half realized the meaning of her words for a moment. Then it flashed upon me that I was to blame for all the trouble that had visited us in the past week. Guilt and contrition mingled with the agony of my heart:

"Aunt Conchita, I'm to blame for poor papa's sickness, for Pedro, for everything," I cried. "If only I had never let myself want beautiful things, luxuries, and pleasures that are not for poor people like ourselves! But a foolish inner voice, a voice of pride and desire, insisted that I was good enough to seek them, and find them. That's why I went to the Conquestador as a cigarette girl. I wanted to be near rich fine people, and enjoy life as they did. Oh! it would have been so much better if I had never wanted beautiful things, luxury, pleasure."

"Nunciata . . ."

My aunt's tone startled me. I looked at her sharply, baffled by the expression of her face and eyes, and the shaking of her brown old hands.

"What is it?" I demanded.

"Nothing, nothing in all the world could ever have kept you from wanting, and seeking such things as you mention. Even had you known the consequences of coveting the life of proud wealthy people, you would have gone on and coveted it. You would have tried to taste of it as you have done," she declared.

"Why? What do you mean?"

"Sssh, Chiquita! Because it is in your blood. Sssh!" she warned again as I got up with a little outcry. "No one must know that I tell you. Your father and brother have kept it from you because they feared your knowing the truth. But, now, you must hear it from me. It will help you to understand the mystery of your wanting things that seemed beyond you. My brother, your father, eloped from Key West twenty years ago with Marguerite d'Alvarado.

"She was the richest and most beautiful girl of Spanish descent in the city. The belle, I tell you! She might have had her pick of all men, but she fell in love with a cigar-maker. Your father was handsome and romantic then. Her people forbade the love affair and disowned her when she ran off and married my brother. She died a year after you came.

"Nunciata, her proud blood flows in your veins. We knew that from your earliest days. You were a fine little lady in your ways from the start. You were a little blue-blood, cara mia, and for good reason. There hangs in the great hall of the d'Alvarado

hacienda a commission from Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain that sent Grandee Pedro d'Alvarado to America in the days following Columbus's discovery of new land. Grandee d'Alvarado came like a prince in galleons fluttering the banners of Church, and Spain. He was one of your forefathers."

"Aunty! Aunty!" I cried burying my head in her lap. It felt as if every part of me was sobbing out with the memories her words brought to my mind and heart. Schuyler Briggs telling me he thought I was a princess stolen by the gypsies; and, all that had come to pass after that. Ah! the way my heart and soul writhed with such remembrances! Even now, sometimes, I feel it all over again.

"Now, Nunciata, you know why you have always longed and yearned for what has seemed beyond you."

"Si, si, Aunt Conchita. And I know, too, that I'll always yearn and yearn for . . ."

"For a man, cara mia, that you love above life, a man you met in the places that called to you. Ah! Santa Maria, a woman knows; a woman understands what I see in your eyes. Nunciata, may the Blessed Mother send him back to you," she said, joining her hands, and lifting her eyes upward.

A look passed between us. The look of two women who understood what was in one of their hearts. Then I turned and went out into the drifting dusk.

A street car brought me to Coral Gables. I shut my eyes and bowed my head as it ran past the Conquestador. At the end of the line I got off. A mysterious force seemed to lead me to an isolated part of the beach. There I sat down in the white sand under a coconut palm with my broken love dreams, and my shattered hopes.

THE amber of dusk deepened into bronze. I turned from the Bay and looked wistfully at the turrets and red-tiled roof of the Conquestador. Again they reminded me of fantastically slanted flames, and I felt the magical spell of the patio at dusk: "If only I were just starting out in the palm patio for the first time, and knew what I know now! The real from the gilded sham . . . Oh! Schuyler, Schuyler," I cried aloud.

For a moment I thought I heard him call my name in answer. I turned, unable to believe my ears. But, they had not deceived me. Schuyler Briggs was standing there in the white sand, his arms opening as he called me.

We moved toward each other slowly. Oh! so slowly, as if we were both afraid we were only phantoms that would fade at touch.

"Nunciata, it must be you. The real you! I've just come from your house. Your Aunt Conchita told me everything about you. She said she thought I would find you here."

"Schuyler, why did you come?" I asked. I knew the answer to my own question, but I wanted him tell me why with his own voice.

He dared to come closer and take me in his arms, no longer afraid I was a phantom. And, I dared to put mine around him as if to hold him from all the world. "Nunciata, I came because I love you, because I want you above everything."

"Kiss me, Schuyler, kiss me so that I may never remember anything except the sweetness of your kiss."

"There is something I must tell you first, darling. I must confess for I want you to know how much you have to forgive in me. We put to sea the night after your brother's coming. But, after two days I was beside myself. I loved you so much my thoughts drove me to desperation. I brought the Desmonda in today and I went to Wainwright determined to force the truth from him, and maybe kill him. Oh! Nunciata, I should have had more faith. But, I was only a man."

"And, Steven Wainwright?" I whispered, thanking God then that there was no real

reason for me to fear anything he might have said.

"He proved himself a white man to the core. Told me how you ran away and everything. Congratulated me on winning the only girl he's ever really loved. He's sailing tonight alone on El Bandelero for the Pacific. Darling can you ever, ever forgive me for doubting you?"

"Kiss me, Schuyler. Hold me close, so close that I'll forget everything except how I love you—love you—love you," I answered. My broken heart seemed magi-

cally to mend, and then overflow with the return of hopes and yearnings that I was afraid had been driven out of it forever.

He took me in his arms, and drew me beautifully close, his lips struggling to tell me something. But, I did not need words from him then. I knew all that was in his heart. I felt all that he felt for me. I wanted his kisses only. So I lifted my lips up to his and in that beloved moment I was at last certain the dream of Nunciata, the little cigarette girl, had come true. For my real and honest dream had been of love.

IF YOUR ambition was to be rich—to have clothes—furs and jewels—and so much money no one could criticize you for anything—how would you go about it? There was only one way that I could see—men. Did I succeed? Well, the intimate pages of my diary will tell you the whole truth about that. I dared not confide in women. I didn't trust them, but into my diary's willing ear I poured all my discoveries about "What Men Want." You may read the beginning of that diary in June SMART SET

Panther Woman or Wife?

[Continued from page 60]

madman intent on just one thing.

The head boy, number one, told me his mistress was resting and could see no one then. Later maybe. While I waited I ordered a bottle of champagne and sat under a shade tree drinking it. It was midday in November, perhaps a little cool to be outdoors but inside in the ballroom with its ring of tables all was dark and deserted.

The boy came and wanted my name. He returned later with a message that 'missie see you tonight. No can do before.' I went back to Shanghai dejected but somehow the long day came to an end and I returned to Kalijah's.

I found her in a beautiful and elaborate native costume, but as her haunting eyes fell upon me, I read something inscrutable, something faintly contemptuous, in their expression.

"Why are you here?" she asked.

"Because I couldn't forget you," I told her.

Her lip curled. "And you left your pretty wife in Hong Kong to come to me?"

"Yes, Kalijah. I'd do anything for you."

"You couldn't do anything for me! On the boat coming across, that was my holiday, that was amusement to kill a dreary voyage, but here it is business, and Kalijah has no precious time to waste on clerks in China."

"Clerk?" I cried. "I'm no clerk. And if it's money you want, look here!" And I tumbled out the ten one hundred bills that represented my capital.

But the woman only sneered. "You call that money? You conceited peacock, do you know that my lovers are princes, men of more wealth and power than you have ever dreamed of in your pitiful existence? Now go back to that young wife of yours, while I am still willing to let you!"

Perhaps it was the last phrase that seemed to offer the hope which held me there. Her refusal had bewitched me more than ever; I could not be dislodged. I went there every night, spent all the money I had with me and more, too, that I drew in advance from the Shanghai agent of the company, but my panther woman scorned me utterly.

And then I was broke and desperate indeed. So that at last Kalijah deigned to notice me.

"You are persistent," she told me. "Well, I take pity on you. You may come to me tonight when the entertainment is over."

I was wild with delight. I did not need drink to be intoxicated. In my exultation and high spirits I invited a fine looking

young chap to join me at my table in Kalijah's ballroom. He had been looking for a place to sit. I saw the number one boy shrug his shoulder and indicate "all filled up." He was looking in my direction and I called him over. He was a strapping athletic build, with dark brown, carefully brushed hair and a very hearty smile.

The drinks were not long in going to his head, and loosening up his tongue. I was past the garrulous and talkative stage. I was content to listen.

"Lively place here," the young man remarked. "Still I wish I could have stayed another day or so in Hong Kong."

"Why?" I asked idly.

"Because in the past week I've been watching the cleverest piece of work I've ever seen, the slickest capture of a reluctant woman I've ever heard about."

I looked mystified, whereupon he laughed and went on:

"Oh, perhaps it's nothing so much after all. They say all women fall pretty easily out here. Only I'd never have believed this woman could be gotten if I hadn't seen it done with my own eyes. Ever hear of a fellow named Barrington?"

I shook my head. "No more did I," the stranger went on, "until last week in Hong Kong. I went to one of the big dances at the King Edward Hotel. In the crowd I happened to find myself near a big tall, handsome fellow. He was whispering to another man with a wicked-looking face, and I was so close I couldn't help overhearing. They were talking about some woman, and the big fellow was giving instructions to his partner.

"Presently the latter crossed the ballroom and I saw him stop in front of the most ravishing-looking girl I'd seen in all Hong Kong. To my astonishment he reached over and put his hand on her shoulder. At the same instant the big good-looking chap, as if sauntering by, caught him by the neck and sent him spinning. He bowed and I saw the girl's eyes light up with gratitude.

"That, of course, interested me, since I realized the whole thing was a plant to gain her confidence. When I asked who the man was, they told me his name was Barrington, a regular bad egg, who's tried blackmail, theft and every other crime to make his living. For recreation he manages to get women in love with him, treats them like the devil, and throws them aside.

"Well, I never interfere. I learned to



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mind my own business long ago, but a strange coincidence happened. The next day I was lunching at one of the lesser hotels when I saw Barrington and the pretty girl he'd pretended to save from insult came in together. They took the table next to mine, and Barrington after one sour look at me, ignored my nearness.

"I listened to his lips with admiration. He flattered her up to the skies, and told her some magnificent lies about himself. I could see the poor kid was tremendously impressed, and he was a practiced lover; he knew how to look at her and how to talk.

"Well, I heard them make another date, and this time being frankly curious, I showed up at the same place. Man, I'm telling you, I never saw anything to beat it. I've hunted big game in my day, but this was the first time I ever saw a thorough-going cad stalk a woman with all the skill and shrewdness of a professional hunter.

"Before the week was through I told myself she hadn't a chance, and yet somehow each day when I managed to see them in the hotels or the bazaars or wandering about together, I realized the girl had held him off somehow.

"Then just before I left, I heard him make a fervent appeal and this time she didn't fight him quite so hard. She promised in the end to meet him and go to the big embassy ball in Hong Kong tomorrow night. Just my luck, I had orders from my firm and had to come down here without seeing how the thing turned out. It's made me curious, you see, and left me up in the air. I've been wondering whether or not that woman will fall. So far she's been reluctant all right, but I expect Barrington will play his big cards tomorrow night. I'd give a good deal to know how the thing turns out."

With my own thoughts full of Kalijah, I had listened to this recital as if I were hearing the details of lives upon another planet. Rather indifferently I said:

"Oh, well, if the woman is all alone, I'd bet on Barrington."

"Possibly. Her fool husband is down here in Shanghai. He's an advertising man working for the Fletcher interests."

Something seemed to leap across my brain, searing it as with agony. The room swam and rocked before me. I gripped the edges of the table, and for a moment I felt as if I were suspended in space.

At that moment one of the China boys approached me and nodded, and excusing myself I rose and followed. In another minute I was in the upper apartments, in a room of gold and lacquer where incense streamed slowly upwards.

My panther woman was smiling at me. But I could only look at her with sick and miserable eyes. Suddenly she had ceased to be desirable to me. Only one thought ached in my unhappy brain. It was I who had caused Evelyn's downfall, it was I, who by following my own mad impulses, had laid her open to temptation. Bitterly I wished I had died and looking at the woman who was the cause of all this, only a kind of despair rose in me. With her keen glance, she saw at once my mood was a dark one. At her first question, I poured it all out, swearing I'd kill Barrington, reproaching her, myself, and everyone under the sun.

"But there is yet time," Kalijah said. "Not until the ball tomorrow night, you tell me, is there danger."

"Tomorrow night!" I cried. "And Hong Kong a thousand miles away! What can I

do? It will be Wednesday before I can get back. My God, I don't dare go back!"

Kalijah was silent for a moment before she said: "In Shanghai there are men with airplanes, men who would carry you swiftly, to get there in time."

But I only laughed harshly at that. "For money, yes. And I haven't a penny, not a yen left!"

She struck a bell, and I heard her speak in dialect to the boy who magically answered it. In less time than it takes to tell, Kalijah had taken a little packet from his hands and put it in mine.

"Your money," she said. "Every cent you've spent. Now go, and remember that Kalijah can be kind when she desires."

"You're doing this thing for me?" I stammered. "You're doing this for me!"

She shook her head. "I am doing this for the pretty girl I saw upon the boat. For her sake, my friend. I do no favors to men like you."

It was too late to do anything that night, but I could not sleep. Tortured by anxiety, I wandered the streets of Shanghai until dawn, and suffered in a way I have not skill to tell.

At the first light I made inquiries, and by nine o'clock, thanks to luck and my determination, I was in the cockpit of a Bleriot flyer, en route for Hong Kong and my wife!

Hour after hour the engines roared and the wind struck my throat like a thing of material substance, and hour after hour I looked down at the seas that wash the shores of China. And when it began to grow darker and the sun began to sink down into the sea I saw far off in the dimness a dark, inky space that I knew was the giant city of Hong Kong.

Three hours later, without having stopped to wash or refresh myself I burst into the Embassy Ball. My eyes were wild enough, God knows, to have made people mistake me for a maniac. With a fearfully thumping heart my glance went around the big lighted room, gay with uniforms and the lovely dresses of the women of the Hong Kong colony.

Then my eyes lighted on Evelyn. She was alone yet, but her gaze seemed to search the room as mine did, though I knew it was not for me that she was looking. The hideous thought that I might be too late sent the blood spinning in my veins. I rushed over to her, and looked into her eyes. They were still the eyes of the pure woman who was my wife.

But in a startled voice, I heard her asking me why and how I had come back so unexpectedly.

"Because I found out it isn't a good thing to leave your wife alone in this damned country," I said. "or a good thing to be alone yourself. Evelyn, I've come back, deserving nothing, only asking forgiveness, but I want you to get your things now and leave this place. I want to leave Hong Kong as soon as I can."

She did not protest. Perhaps the determination in my voice was not to be resisted. Only as we moved away, I thought I saw a glance pass from her to a tall man who stood near the entrance, a man with handsome, hawklike features, and a weary look of wisdom in his eyes.

But I did nothing and said nothing. What right had I, after my enslavement by my panther woman, to reproach my still guiltless wife? I knew only that from now on, for good or bad, Evelyn and I would be together. I bowed my head before the miracle that had saved me. There would be no more panther women in my life, ever again.

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Hunted Lovers

[Continued from page 28]

rifle to his shoulder, the half-breed drew a bead on the open space ahead.

Invisible hands were clutching at my contorting throat as the swish of a sledge grew closer. Any moment Wolfclaws's victim would dash into sight. I thanked God for the screen of cone pines. It would save me from witnessing deliberate murder, and forever remembering the way the stranger would plunge into the snow when Wolfclaws's bullet hit him.

I tried to shut my eyes to the spectacle of Wolfclaws standing with aimed rifle, but there was something fearfully fascinating about him waiting to kill.

Suddenly his shoulders hunched upward. Wolfclaws half stepped from behind his shelter of trees, and fired twice in rapid succession. Dogs barked.

Then nausea swept over me and a force stronger than the fearful fascination of Wolfclaws closed my eyes. I did not open them again until I heard his gloating voice. I was horribly sure he was sneering at the dead, or the mortally wounded. But the half-breed was doing neither. With aimed rifle, he was commanding his victim to advance further into the open space with his hands up:

"I GOT somebody here to see you. She like you so much she coom all this way jus' to watch me keel you. Come now, three, five, steps! That's enough," he said. He stood like a statue with an aimed rifle. "Now, you Murdermouth, pull Mam'selle Jacqueline close to me. Murdermouth, here!" he commanded.

The sledge moved up toward Wolfclaws. As it slid from behind the screen of trees I beheld the handsome young stranger standing about ten feet away, holding his hands high above his head. He had the look on his face of the man who knows he is fatally trapped, but who feels a fine scorn for all that may happen. A thrill passed through me although I was afraid some of his fine scorn was for me. Perhaps he didn't realize I was bound to the sledge.

"You got somethings to say, Mister? Hey? Somethings before you make long, long trip? Yes? No?" taunted the half-breed, not moving a shoulder, or body muscle.

His helpless victim answered his taunting with a brave silence, looking from Wolfclaws and his threatening gun to me, then to the great dog Captain that stood in motionless silence, as bravely scornful as his master. The big dog's eyes were blazing at Colombes like two balls of fire. A strange feeling gripped me as I realized that the animal sensed his master's peril, and was sharing it in his faithful dog heart.

"You got notheengs, hey?" insisted Colombes.

"Yes!" the word rang out of the stranger's mouth like a shot. "Hurry up and shoot if you're up to that, and go to hell—"

"Bah, I shoot!" cut in Wolfclaws and his massive shoulders hunched upwards. My throat felt as if it would burst because I wanted to scream and could not.

Suddenly a savage growl filled the air.

A great ball of brown fur and bared fangs was hurling itself at Colombes. In a twinkling the statue-like pose of the half-breed was shattered by the charge of Englow's attacking wolf-malamute. Wolfclaws swerved like a streak of lightning to shoot the big dog but for once, he was up against something that moved faster than he did. Captain was at the bad man's throat before he could take aim. I saw the rifle

flash out of Wolfclaws's hand, thrust back by the impetus of the dog's attack. Almost at that very moment the young mystery man, who had charged forward upon Captain's leaping attack, flung himself at Colombes.

The two men were trying to throw each other while Captain's teeth were ripping away Wolfclaws's heavily furred parka, seeking a hold on his flesh. All the dogs of both teams had set up a terrific barking, their savage natures aroused by the fury of the combat. Captain, dragging his team after him, had pulled them almost face to face with Wolfclaws's dogs, and only the slightest move on any animal's part was needed to throw the whole crowd into battle.

A foot suddenly kicked the rifle, which went off with a startling bang. The shot hit one of the half-breed's swing dogs. With a snarl of pain the wounded husky leaped at the nearest of Englow's team. His move was like a signal. The dogs of both teams sprang at each other like two wolf packs fighting for self-preservation. The air was mad with savage tumult as the men and dogs became a roaring tangle of legs, paws, arms, and struggling bodies.

As they turned over and over Englow and Wolfclaws, now locked in iron grips went rolling out of the dog fight, and out of my sight, each one struggling to the death. From that moment on all I could see was the frenzied dogs with whom Captain had joined in battle.

Biting, clawing and ripping at each other they dragged the sledges after them in the awful battle. Captain was in the thickest of the fighting, closing in with every enemy brute that came within reach. The powerful leader of the Englow team owned a killer's heart in a fight. He gave no quarter. Two of Wolfclaws's dogs dropped in the blood-reddened snow after Captain once caught them in his teeth.

When he closed in on Murdermouth, the other brutes drew snarling aside, wary of each others' every glance and move, as they watched their leaders rip and claw each other. Two dogs that had reverted to the Wild! The wolf in them was out!

The dog fight was too much for my eyes. I looked away only to catch sight of the two men grappling fiercely in the snow that was streaked with crimson. They rolled over and over. A tree got in their way.

At the moment the young stranger was on top of Wolfclaws in a position that freed his left arm for action. Up it went, and hung poised for a second as if its owner were putting into it every ounce of strength he owned. In that second Colombes unsheathed a knife. The blade gleamed backward for a half-stroke. As it started for its mark, Englow's fist descended like a club against Wolfclaws's temple. The knife fell shimmering into the snow.

I DON'T know why I didn't faint. Perhaps it was because all of the dogs were fighting again, and my sledge was jerked and yanked this way, and that by the movements of Colombes's desperate malamutes.

A rifle shot rang out. There was an animal's death cry in the air. Englow wavered a moment on his feet above one of the half-breed's dogs then he reeled drunkenly toward me. A wild glance must have shown him I was bound. A knife flashed in his hand and I was freed from the buckskin thongs. I moved my hands and feet. They ached terribly. I fumbled at my mouth gag. The awful tightness of my

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throat eased, but it was agony to swallow. The stranger leaned over me, an unsteady shadow for a moment, then toppled to the ground.

I suppose we can all do impossible things when we have to. It seemed as if I couldn't command my strength, and rise from that sledge. Yet, with the young stranger lying unconscious in the snow, I knew the time had come for me to take hold. I got up with painful effort, and stumbled over to Englow's sledge. There must be whiskey in it.

Dogs lay all around me. Those that had survived the horrible fight, and those that had not. I saw four dead ones—three of Wolclaws's team—one of Englow's. Captain, a great gash across his chest, was in command. Murdernouth lay stiff, and hideous under his front paws. All the fight was gone out of the other surviving brutes. They lay trembling in the snow.

I DARED a glance at Wolclaws as my hands groped under the sledge robes for a bottle. He was sprawled on his back, but he did not seem really dead. Frantically I searched for the whiskey. Suppose the half-breed came to life before I aroused Englow from his faint? My desperate fingers finally touched a flask.

A few moments later the whiskey worked its magic on Barrett Englow. It gave him strength enough to get up with my help, and stagger over to his sledge.

"Captain boy! Good old Captain," he murmured as we swayed past the husky who was making strange, joyful sounds in his dog way.

The gratitude and the tenderness in the man's voice warmed me with the hope that someday, somehow, there might be such tenderness in his voice for me. New strength flowed through me after that, or else I would have failed the man who had given his last ounce of strength in the fight that had saved us both from Colombes.

Covering Englow snugly with his robes, I went over near Wolclaws. He was lying very still, and ghastly. If I'd had the nerve I would have bound him hand and foot, but I was afraid to touch him.

I picked up his rifle, and the knife he'd tried to stab Englow with and walked away. Tying the broken sledge traces together in rough fashion, I hitched Englow's five surviving dogs, and gave Captain his head. The great dog seemed to understand that everything depended upon him. He strained forward. The others followed suit, and the sledge bearing his unconscious master moved away from the gruesome scene. The stiff dead dogs! And beyond them the half-human I'd left to die! I felt awful, leaving him there to freeze, but he had tried to commit murder in front of my eyes. If he was not already dead he deserved to die.

Cold and weakness were upon me but I clung to the handles, and in that way finally arrived at the cabin. Another dose of whiskey aroused Englow. I assisted him to the cot inside where he fell into another deep swoon.

I rushed out and brought in all the weapons on the sledge, then cut the dogs loose from their traces, and let them follow me indoors.

I started a fire, barred the door, and put water on to boil. The stranger's wounded arm would need dressing, and fresh bandaging after all he had gone through. While waiting for the water to boil I brought him around to a state of semi-consciousness. His parka had to be cut away because he could not raise his right arm. The wound had stiffened all the muscles but at last the arm was washed, and re-bandaged. Only one stitch had broken in the fight. It was a miracle that they weren't all torn loose.

"Try to go to sleep," I said. I knew that

he was half-dead from cold and weariness.

He turned his eyes up to mine. A vague grayness stole into their blue. In another moment they closed, and the man I believed to be Alan Wendring was sleeping the sleep of utter exhaustion. I got up from the bed and looked around. The dogs were all stretched out asleep on the floor. I went over and sat by the fire-place so that I could see the young stranger's face. It was handsome even in sleep.

The crackling warmth of the room, and the sight of him lying on his cot, filled my heart with wistful dreams. I made-believe it was our cabin, not his alone. I dreamed that love, not self-preservation was the reason for our being together, and that he was only dozing off, and would soon awaken to take me in his arms.

I cannot tell you all I dreamed. Things like that cannot be put into words, but I abandoned myself to them for a long time until a yapping sound reached my ears.

My warm, intimate dreams froze at the voice of the white foxes down in the woods. All the details of the past dreadful night and morning rushed back through my consciousness. Then a feeling of blessed relief swept over me. The yapping of white foxes must mean the end of my worst terror—Wolclaws.

Suddenly I thought of my borrowed dog team tethered down in the woods. We would need every husky available for the long pull that lay ahead of us. I got up, and went out of the cabin to fetch the dogs, commanding Captain to follow me.

As I munched on after them a sudden determination to make sure that the menace of Wolclaws was ended possessed me.

I had no fear of the little white animals whose voices filled the morning air. They preyed on the dead, not the living. They would scurry away at my approach. It would be worth the horror of a moment's view just to confirm Wolclaws's death.

The yapping of the white foxes died down as I munched through the woods. I heard them scrambling away in all directions. Before I knew it I was looking upon the scene of the late battle.

A CRY of fright and surprise broke from my lips as my startled eyes beheld no sign of Wolclaws. He was gone! The little white foxes had been at the dogs!

Captain was sniffing the place where the half-breed had been lying. Panicky at the realization of the man's disappearance, I watched the husky follow a blood trail that led off to the left. I tried to call him back, but he was determined to stay on the trail. Believing it would solve the mystery of how Colombes got away after being left half-dead in the snow, I mustered courage enough to follow the dog. I had a gun, and I figured Wolclaws was weaponless.

The trail led to the spot where Wolclaws had tethered my borrowed team to a tree. My sledge and dogs were gone! It could mean only one thing. Wolclaws had only played dead in the snow. He had made his way back to my borrowed team, and was already on the way to Waskia.

Captain wanted to follow the trail riverward, but I held him fast. There was no time to lose in vain pursuit. Englow's safety, if he was really a hunted man, lay in swift flight. Colombes would make Waskia in a few hours, and once there he would confirm the message he'd sent by his dog and put the law on Englow's trail.

Suddenly I found myself hoping Englow really was Wendring, a hunted man. I could help him then. I would offer to save him from the law. I would flee with him to some place where the Royal Mounted could not hunt him down. As this determination settled over me the Voice of the Wilderness seemed to be speaking again.

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This time it was offering a haven of refuge. "Take him to the Valley of the Wind," the Voice seemed to whisper.

The Valley of the Wind!

My father had often spoken of the place. It was three hundred miles away in the direction of Hudson's Bay. In that Valley, Wild River mysteriously hid itself from the eyes of men. The Indians claimed that all the winds of the seas, the woods, and the heavens were made up in the Valley. Legends said it was the one place where hunted men and beasts were almost sure not to be caught. Tracks and scents were lost in the confusion of winds, they declared. The belief that Destiny had taken a hand in my life again possessed me. I decided that everything had happened for the purpose of bringing the stranger and myself together at the ends of the earth, where, away from all the world, we would find the truth in each others' hearts.

The mystery man was still sleeping heavily when I entered the cabin, panting for breath. I started to awaken him at once, but the drawn, haggard look on his face made me change my mind. Time was precious, if he really were Alan Wending. Sergeant Jack Greystone of the Royal Mounted was a man-hunter who never tired of the chase. He was back in Waskia by this time and would hot-foot it after Wending when he saw the clippings and heard Wolfclaw's story. Yet the stranger would need every ounce of strength, vitality and endurance for the flight. It was wisest to let him sleep awhile. We would still be hours ahead of pursuit.

HIS eyes slowly opened. He stared at me in utter bewilderment. Realizing that he was struggling vainly to grasp the situation I went to his help.

"I'm Jacqueline, the Wine Star cabaret girl. Don't you remember what happened? The awful fight between the dogs, and you and Wolfclaws. You cut my buckskin bonds after it was over, then fainted."

"I didn't kill him, did I?" he interrupted hoarsely. He acted like a man haunted by the shadow of murder. He shuddered, and covered his eyes with his good hand as if to shut out some vision that tortured him. I understood. He was remembering that he was Alan Wending, wanted for the death of a fellow man. It was agonizing to think he had deepened the shadow that had trailed him into the far North. A great pity for him walled up inside of me; somehow, I could not think of him as a killer. He was more like a boy pursued by some horrible phantom from the past.

"No, you did not kill him," I said, and was about to tell him everything, including Wolfclaws's escape to Waskia, and the imminent danger of the Royal Mounted being on the trail of Alan Wending when the man interrupted me.

"Thank God I didn't really put him out!" Then, after a slight pause during which his face hardened, he blurted: "What the devil are you doing here?"

"I came through the storm last night to warn you that Colombe was starting out to ambush you," I answered. I was hoping against hope that this explanation would soften the expression on his face, and work an inner change in his unaccountable resentment toward me.

"That doesn't jibe with your being on his sledge when he caught me off-guard."

"Don't you remember? I was bound to his sledge," I said. I was on the verge of tears at the knowledge that he was doing his best to think the worst of me. It seemed so unfair just because Wolfclaws had given him false reasons to believe I was his girl.

"Yes, that's true. But, suppose Wolfclaws couldn't trust you?" he demanded.

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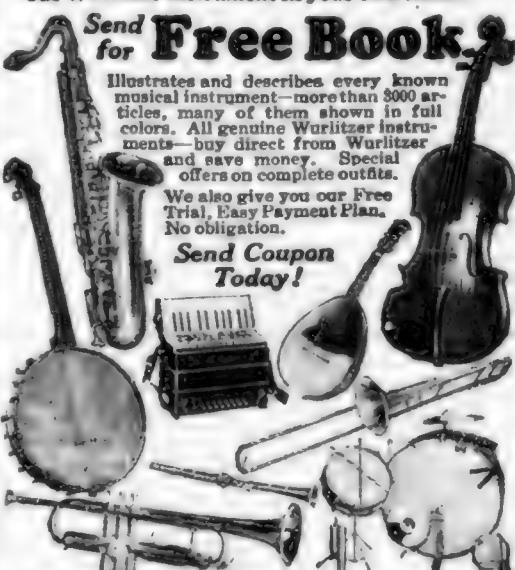
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I felt as if he had struck me across the face with those words, and then driven a knife into my heart. I wanted to make him see the cruel wrong he was doing me, but I realized the menace of pursuit and capture that was overshadowing him. My own feelings must be sacrificed, and his awful opinion of me tolerated until there was a chance to explain. The present moment must be used for the pressing emergency of establishing his identity. If he really was Alan Wendring, immediate flight was the only alternative left.

"Are you really Barrett F. Englow as you call yourself, or are you a man named Alan Wendring?" I demanded.

"What makes you ask such a queer question?" he asked.

"I arrived here before you and I went through your things," I began. Confession was coming harder than I expected it would. "I went through them because—because I was interested in you. You've made a mystery of yourself to everybody around here. I found some newspaper clippings about a murder, and a man named Alan Wendring being wanted for the crime."

"Well, what of it?" he asked with a show of bravado. "Anybody can cut clippings from a newspaper."

"But the scar," I said. I realized how foolhardy it was to waste time coming to the issue. "If you're really Barrett F. Englow, you've got nothing to worry about."

Those words almost brought him to his feet. His air of bravado died down. His voice was tense: "What do you mean, nothing to worry about?"

"Wolfclaws Colombes caught me here reading those clippings. He overpowered me, and read them himself. Knowing about your scar, he put two and two together. Colombes believes you are Alan Wendring and so do I. Are you?"

"Yes, I am," he said, after a strained silence. "and because I am, I—" he shuddered, "I'll have to go back and kill that scoundrel I left half-dead in the woods. It's the only way to keep my secret. That is if—if you don't give me away."

"You needn't worry about me," I said, "but, you've got to worry about Wolfclaws. He's not lying half-dead back in the woods for you to kill. Wolfclaws is on his way to Waskia to put Sergeant Greystone on your trail."

"What?" he cried. An unbelieving look came into his eyes, but when I told him about the dog being sent to Waskia with the clippings and how I found evidence that Wolfclaws had left the scene of battle to spread the story Alan Wendring was

swiftly convinced that he would soon be a hunted man in every sense of the word.

"There's not a minute to be lost now," I said. "Your only hope lies in getting a big headstart. Sergeant Greystone who's due back in Waskia today is the most famous man-hunter in his Division."

"There's nothing to keep me from starting now," he returned, "but the thing is where to go. The Royal Mounted know all the hiding places in the country."

"There's a place where the hunted are hardly ever found, the Valley of the Wind," I said, fighting for the nerve to say I intended going with him.

"The Valley of the Wind," he repeated. "How do I get there?" He was up on his feet by this time.

"You'd never find it by directions. That's one reason I'm going to take you there. There are other reasons, too. I'm to blame for all this trouble! Every bit of it! I've got to see you through."

"But, you don't seem to understand that I'd prefer going alone," he broke in.

"Neither do you understand," I said. Oh! Why was he being so hard on me? Why was he so willing to hurt me? "I've got to go. I'm hunted, too. Wolfclaws has sworn he will take me. His path must never cross mine again," I ended.

There was one more reason, the biggest one of all, why I was determined to go with him. I did not want to lose him.

I clung to the idea that I must go with him. I dared to hope that his feelings for me would change when the wild closed in upon us, and we found ourselves at the beginning of all things, a man, and woman, facing the primitive.

As I stood there with this hope rising through my heart there was a sharp, snapping report outside. Nervous, and unstrung from all that had happened overnight I started violently. Already the strain of knowing that we had become a hunted man and woman was overshadowing me. Some of the fear that a creature of the living Wild knows when pursued gripped me. I rushed to the door while Alan Wendring snatched a pistol and followed me.

Crack! went another report.

We both started, our eyes focussing on the deep woods through which we knew pursuit must come. Suddenly the trees seemed no longer green to my eyes. My imagination changed them to red-coated figures, and I shut my eyes before the vision of an army of His Majesty's Royal Northwest Mounted Police bearing down upon me, and the man I had fallen in love with.

COULD it be possible that Sergeant Greystone was on our trail so soon? Surely Wolfclaws's dog hadn't yet reached Waskia with the clippings? Were we not to have a chance to find a hiding place in the Valley of the Wind that seemed to offer us security and possibly happiness as well? In June SMART SET I will tell you all that happened to us in the days that followed.

The Girl I Might Have Been

[Continued from page 41]

between me and the boys. I've been a good girl, Jim, the best good girl you ever saw. I'm just crazy about you, Jim. I'd work for you; leave the chorus; do anything."

I knew girls who loved fellows and supported them. I couldn't think of any other way to make Jim see how much I loved him.

"I'll work for you, Jim. I'll support you; you won't need to work. I'm young and strong. I'll do anything just so you don't

leave me. Oh, please don't. I love you so, Jim."

Jim's face looked very white in the queer light, the moon pushing its way through the shadows. He laid his hand on my head.

I thought he was giving in, but all he said was: "You poor little girl, has life gone so hard with you? Do you think I could do that?"

"I wouldn't care, Jim. Just so you loved me and told me so once in a while. It's a wonderful thing when a girl loves a man as

I love you, Jim. And please, please don't think I'm bad. I'm wild but I haven't been bad."

He gave me a look that sent happiness to my very soul: "I believe you, Peggy."

"You believe me?"

"Yes! So help me! I do believe you. A girl like you couldn't put it on. You're too real for that!"

"Oh, Jim! You believe me. That's enough! I'm so happy I could die. Then you're going home with me, Jim!"

JIM shook his head; and his face was white. "No Peggy, I'm too decent for that."

"Too decent! Oh Jim! Tell me what you mean!" My head was in a whirl. "You wouldn't love me because I was so bad, and now when I tell you I'm good you won't love me."

He did not answer. I felt as if he was far away from me.

"What's the matter with me Jim?"

"Just this, Peggy!" And his voice was queer. "Just this! You're the sweetest, darlings girl I ever knew. I didn't suppose there was such a girl in this wide world, a girl who would give everything and want nothing. I haven't met that kind before. And that's the reason, Peggy."

"I don't understand Jim."

"Then I'll tell you right out. You're a girl a man could lose his head over. I'm losing mine. You're not a girl to be loved and left; to be made the most of and tossed aside. I couldn't do that, Peggy! You're a girl who could fill a man's life. You could be more to a man than any woman ever was to a man before. I couldn't play with you—and say good-by. I'm too decent for that. It would be all or nothing with you and me! And there is a great gulf between us."

"Couldn't we cross it, Jim if I loved you enough. I'd try so hard! Won't you try, Jim?"

"You can't understand Peggy. You don't know what you're saying or what you are asking of me."

"Then you don't think you could ever love me—and want to marry me, Jim?"

He put his arm around me. I laid my head on his shoulder and took both his hands in mine.

"Do girls sometimes die when they're perfectly happy?" I asked. He rested his head on my hand and something went singing through my heart that was like music. "I didn't know a girl could be so happy."

Then Jim lifted his head and drew away his arm. "I told you, Peggy, that it wasn't safe. I can't trust myself. You're the dearest little girl!"

"Oh, you're not leaving me, Jim?"

"Yes. You don't understand, Peggy!"

"Would you have left me if I hadn't been so wild that you're ashamed of me?"

"I would never have left you Peggy, if you had been a lady."

"You ought not to say that, Jim. It isn't fair. My mother was a lady. She lived in a big city out West. My father was a doctor. They died and I came to New York. And I went wild. Please, please don't be ashamed of me. I'm going to be a lady. I know how to be a lady."

Jim's face flushed. He did not answer but I knew he was ashamed of me.

"Say good-by to me, Peggy," he said.

And, then, I forgot that I was a girl whom Jim did not love. I forgot everything except that I loved Jim and he was going away. I had my arms around his neck and I was kissing him.

"Peggy, Peggy! There! there! I'm so sorry." And he was untwining my arms from around his neck. "Don't, Peggy, don't!" His eyes were agonized; and there was a look in his face like a man who was gazing into a Heaven denied, but he went.

I kept my eyes upon him as far as I could see him, until he had entered the house and the music had swallowed him up.

I had lost him. I had driven him away with my wild conduct; and, no matter what I did now, I could never recall what I had done. I could not go back and live my life over again. No girl ever can.

But I would leave the chorus. I knew that never again could I dance with my old joyousness. I could not even stay there, that night, in that gay scene another minute, with my heart like lead.

I found my gaudy old hat and started for home alone. I traveled all the way feeling dazed, scarcely knowing where I was going. Of what use was it to go back to my room? Of what use to go anywhere? I had wrecked my own happiness, killed all I loved in life, and now I had no place to go. There was not a place on earth that offered me anything I cared for. My little room with its memories of those old happy days was hateful to me. Where could I go? I felt as if the last wave of sorrow had swept over me. I could not see my way ahead. I had known girls like me who killed themselves for love. I wanted to die. Oh, if I only knew what those poisons were that girls buy when they want to die? I groped my way along Forty-Second Street, through the merry excited crowds coming out of restaurants where they had dined. I struggled along as far as Sixth Avenue. Here, under the elevated, the shadows cast a broad band of black. I felt faint and tired. I could not go any further. A queer fluttering was in my heart. My throat felt tight and dry. I would sit down a minute and rest.

I heard singing in the distance. Oh, why must I hear it? I wanted to shut out music and singing from my life forever. I was crazed. I could not breathe, nor think, nor hold up my head. Oh, that music coming nearer!

I got to my feet. I must struggle on. There was a doorway. I sank on its step, helpless this time, my head in my hands, the wretchedest girl on earth. I must have gone a little off my head . . . I couldn't reason clearly. There was music in the air . . . on the street. I saw girls in blue dresses, big bonnets! They were singing; and there was a bugle.

"Come. Come. No longer roam! Sister! Brother! I will take you home!"

I couldn't move. The doorstep seemed like home. I was so glad of its warmth and, then, I heard a girl's voice: "What's the matter, sister?" It was a "lassie," a girl in a blue bonnet.

"I want to die, that's all."

"Come, I'll take you home with me." Her arm was around me and she was leading me away. My flame red chiffon blew in tatters around us both. The girl in the blue bonnet was taking me home with her. I was sick and even the warm night air stung me like a cold lash.

"It's only a little further," the lassie said cheerily, "and then you'll have a nice warm bed as long as you want to stay." And, so, she took me home.

IT WAS days before I was out again, and I could not go back to the chorus. It had not led me to happiness, only to sorrow. And these people I had been with were happy. They were safe. That was the secret of their happiness. The heart-breaks of the world never touched them. If they had had their sorrows they were submerged in the tide of contentment that flowed around them. I wanted to stay with them, to rest under the shadow of the protecting wing that covered them.

I became a recruit, a student in their "College." And, because I could sing and play, they let me put on a bonnet and go out into the street with them. I went into

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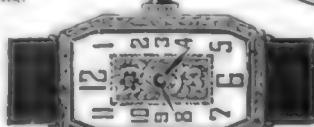
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their "Open Air Ring." I don't think the good lassies ever guessed what it meant to me, to find contentment. I could march with a trombone for hours. I could play a tambourine and sing. There were nights at those street meetings when I sang to bigger audiences than I ever kicked to in those old days in the chorus.

I thought of Jim, now, as a bright and handsome star in whose radiance I had crept for a moment, but vanished, now, forever.

And, then, the order came to "do the night clubs," and I knew that I would have to meet the old set. For it was in our old street, the street where Strike and I had gone to that midnight restaurant. And we were to "do all the clubs, all the restaurants." I knew that I would in all likelihood see them all, Suzette and Strike and, I scarcely dared to think of it, but perhaps I would see Jim.

A few nights later the Captain led the way into a night club. It was the one where Strike had taken me. I was trembling as we mounted the stairs, but we had to follow where our Captain led.

As we entered the room my eyes were blinded by the light, the gay girls in their chiffons, rouged, laughing, miserable, going the pace. Our old crowd was there, and Jim was with them. They were a gay party and the Captain led us toward them. At first they shouted with laughter. I heard Jim say: "What kind of a stunt is this?"

He thought the owner of the restaurant had planned a new form of entertainment. But we stood firmly there; and I know that my face shone with earnestness under my blue bonnet. I saw that Jim was thin and haggard and unhappy in spite of his gaiety.

THEN the Captain stepped out. He was a young man who had left his farm to come and be a Salvationist. He began to pray. I felt a hush fall upon them. Then he preached a little sermon. Jim had stopped laughing, for he saw that it was a serious service. The Captain spoke to me. I stepped into the little semi-circle and began to sing. I did not look at Jim, but I knew that he was looking at me. Oh how I sang! I never knew what it was to feel a song before. And Jim was standing up, pressing closer to us, following me with eyes that never faltered. I finished my song. The Captain gave the word and we turned and went down the stairs.

But Jim was at my side. "Peggy, Peggy!"

I could not answer him. We were in the street, marching on to the next night club, and all the way Jim was following us, trying to speak to me, trying to tell me that he had looked for me.

"Peggy, Peggy. I love you. Where can I see you?"

It was against our rules, but Jim looked so wretched. "I'm selling the War Cry to-morrow morning."

"Where?" He was marching as near me as he could. "Where, Peggy? Peggy, dear! Tell me where?"

"Under the elevated, Park Row Station!" I hadn't time to say any more, but I knew that Jim was following us; that he never lost sight of us; that he heard us sing at two more night clubs, keeping as close to me as possible; and that he followed us all the way back to Headquarters and stood in the street until the door closed upon us.

When I reached my post next morning under the elevated, I found Jim waiting for me. His eyes were haggard as if he had

been up all night. I had my bundle of War Cries under my arm. "Give them to me," Jim ordered, but I could not. Discipline was discipline and I had my work to do. "Here, I'll buy them all," he cried. And he took them out of my hands.

I tried to protest. "I'm under orders!"

BUT he would not listen. "I've been up to Headquarters," he declared, "and I've seen the high cockalorum. Told her all about it, all about everything. Those people are all right; they want you to be happy. Now come!"

"Where?" I asked. For my new life had made me less impetuous. I was a different Peggy. I must be sure that Jim loved me for myself, not out of pity. And as for marriage, well, marriage was a three-fold cord of love and moral value and respect.

"Don't tell me you don't love me Peggy! Don't tell me that. I couldn't stand it, after all I've been through. You do, don't you Peggy?"

I was glad that my bonnet shielded my face.

He had called a taxi; and I was in it and he was sitting alongside me. "Don't say a word, Peggy," he pleaded. "I've searched for you ever since that night. God, I've been desperate. I've nearly gone to the dogs, all because of you Peggy, because I thought I'd never find you again. You can't get away from me now. You're mine."

It was wonderful being there with Jim, hearing his voice, but I had to be certain. "Do you love me enough, now, Jim?"

And Jim laughed; he was so irrepressibly happy. "You just listen. I'm going to tell the world I do!"

"What on earth do you mean?"

"I mean we're on the way to the license bureau and the little chapel. And, first we've got to go shopping. We've got to buy a wedding ring, and an engagement ring. And, then, I'll tell you if I love you just as much as ever."

"But Jim," I began, "we've got to understand! Don't please! There goes my bonnet! I could talk better if you wouldn't kiss me nor hug me just for a minute. This is awful!"

"Can't help it Peggy! I'm like a wild man. I thought I had lost you, the dearest, sweetest girl that ever lived."

The taxicab stopped. "What place is this, Jim?"

"The City Hall. Come along, Peggy!" He reached into the taxi and lifted me out.

And, then the din began. There were six of them there, and the Captain. They had come down to be our witnesses. "Come on, Peggy." Jim was holding my arm, pulling me along. "Aren't you happy? Just say you're happy."

We went to the license bureau, and from there, with the band playing, into the little wedding chapel. Then Jim was shaking hands with everybody, and everybody wishing us joy!

We were back in the taxicab again, married. And we had not yet had our understanding. I had to talk it out with Jim. "You've had to give up an awful lot for me Jim. Your pride, your place in society. You're sacrificing so much for me."

"And you're giving up an awful lot for me, Peggy."

I settled down beside Jim. A strange quiet had come over us both. We were married. Jim was giving up. I was giving up. His life—my life. Each giving a little to meet the other.

DO YOU believe that if you want anything enough you'll find a way to get it? I had almost everything a girl could want except friends of my own age and I needed them. I wanted love and all that it stood for and I wanted it so much that—well I'll tell you in an early issue how Love Found a Way.

Forgive Me My Trespasses

[Continued from page 51]

through me, a growing, poised, seriousness, a new and deliberate sort of dignity. Kathleen Gray was not as emotional as Savannah Lane had been; she was a different sort of a girl with a quiet philosophy. She was the kind of a girl who would be a safe governess for young children in a home of refinement.

WHEN I mailed the letter the change that was upon me deepened. I was Kathleen Gray, in reality, waiting for an answer to an application for a position.

Three days passed. I did not go near the cloak and suit house. My days as a mannikin were ended. At last a letter in a square envelope and written on heavy paper came to Miss Kathleen Gray.

"Dear Miss Gray:

Will you please call and see me at three o'clock Thursday afternoon at the Hotel Renaissance.

Sincerely,
Mrs. J. Arthur Gardener."

Thursday! That was the next day. The brevity of the note was chilling, but the fact that I had received an answer gave me a slight thrill of satisfaction. This was the beginning!

When I presented myself at the Hotel Renaissance the next day, I had gathered my forces. I had calmed myself inside. I was coolly and deliberately Kathleen Gray, the most respectable young person imaginable. In the past I had used a sparing amount of rouge on my face and lips, but now I was determinedly without the faintest trace of make-up. Of my two hats I wore the one that was prim.

Mrs. Gardener received me in the parlor of her suite. She was a slightly artificial woman of middle age, with an intensely social air. Something about her reminded me of a pert, nervous bird. She looked at me appraisingly with her tired eyes, and, I thought, found me harmless.

"Now, Miss Gray, your experience, please. You may tell me briefly. What is your background, and what has your experience been?"

I took her at her word and made it brief. The respectable story of my bringing up carried, I am sure, the unmistakable ring of truth. As for my experience, I merely stated I had been in New York a year and had held several stenographic positions.

"You understand the care of children, I mean in an educational sense?" She asked me, without much interest, I thought.

"I think so." I told her. "I know that I love children devotedly."

"Oh dear, that's such a satisfaction," she said in relief. "One is always so worried when they must entrust their little darlings to other hands. Really, you have no idea how I worry about it, Miss Gray. It's the same with the car. I just know the driver takes it out joy-riding when we are not using it, and Heaven knows how he abuses it. Competence and loyalty are so difficult to find these days. I have so many demands made upon my time, and I simply cannot see to everything."

Mrs. Gardener looked extremely worried and virtuous. Beside her on the little card table was a stack of letters, and she turned from me to look at them helplessly.

"All of those are answers to our advertisement," she sighed. "I suppose I really should go through them one by one, but I don't see that it would serve any useful purpose. Engaging anybody is always such a gamble, you know. I just picked your

letter out at random and answered it. That's just as satisfactory a way, I suppose, as any."

"You make your home here in the hotel?" I inquired politely.

"Oh, dear no. We are only here temporarily. Our place is out at Zenith, Long Island. The children are out there now with the present governess, who is leaving this week to be married. Oh, yes, I almost forgot, Miss Gray, about references. Just as a matter of form, I think you ought to give me several references. My husband is always so particular about those things."

I was startled by the sudden realization that I had overlooked this most important factor. Kathleen Gray had no references. Any references under the name of Savannah Lane would be fatal to desirable employment. My mind came to a standstill.

"You have references, of course?" Mrs. Gardener asked again.

"Yes, certainly," I told her quickly. The necessity for gaining time to think was very acute, and, fortunately, I had the wit to divert her. "I would like to know more about the position, though," I said.

"Oh yes, of course. Ours is a very small family; my husband and I and the two children. Janie is seven and little David is only five. They are dear children, really. Your own duties would be very slight, merely to supervise the children and their clothes. You would have your own room and you would not be required to dine with the servants. Your meals could be served in your room. We pay our present governess sixty dollars a month. I am quite sure you would find the employment very pleasant. We would be ready for you to come next Monday."

"May I consider myself engaged, Mrs. Gardener?"

"Yes, I think you may. You seem to be quite nice but, as I said before, engaging anyone is always a gamble, if you know what I mean."

I ROSE to leave. Looking back I am sure, now, that any idea of references completely filtered from her empty little head, but my mind was still struggling with that difficulty. I wanted to think, to plot.

"Would tomorrow be too late for me to bring you my references, Mrs. Gardener?" I asked her.

"Not at all, my dear," she said—"but wait! Would it be just as convenient for you to mail them out to us at Zenith? I may be away from the hotel most of the day tomorrow."

This was unexpected relief. I told her that her suggestion was perfectly satisfactory and she went to a desk and scribbled the address on a card.

"Monday, then, sure." She said to me with a smile that seemed to urge me out of the room. "I am sure you will be quite happy with us, Miss Gray. And thank you ever so much for coming."

Back in my shabby little room, I began to battle grimly with the problem of the references for Kathleen Gray. Deceit was necessary, but it would be harmless deceit. I knew in my heart that I was a satisfactory person for the position. And that, for me, was enough.

So far as Mrs. Gardener herself was concerned, I had no doubt that references mattered scarcely at all, but there was her husband to consider. She had said he was particular about such things. I would have to get references from some place, and that was a task more difficult than the creation of Kathleen Gray.

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The telephone downstairs rang. Our slatternly maid of all work came up and knocked on my door. Someone was calling me. It was, of all people, Kenneth Karby.

"Miss Lane," he said. "I want to see you. You have had time now, I think, to cool off. Won't you be a good sport and let me talk to you for a little while?"

A N idea, like a streak of fire, sprang across my mind. Why not? The Karby family had injured me enough. Why not, now, use their name to my own advantage?

"Yes, I want to see you," I told Kenneth Karby with sudden decision. "Can you come down here immediately?"

Thirty minutes later we were together, sitting in a little neighborhood tea room.

"You said yesterday that you might be willing to help me," I reminded him. "If you were sincere I am going to give you a chance. Your father utterly ruined my name. As Savannah Lane I am a notorious creature. I want to live that down. I want to get rid of the name that he dragged in the mud. I have taken a new name, Kathleen Gray. A position has been offered me under that name. My past will not be known. I can start fresh at something that I want to do, but I must have references. Will you, on your office stationery and over your own signature, write a letter stating that Kathleen Gray has been in the employ of your firm for a year, that she is a competent, reliable person and thoroughly honorable?"

He looked at me thoughtfully.

"That is a perfectly harmless request, if you're on the square," he said deliberately. "If you have any funny business in mind, however, it would be taking a dangerous responsibility."

"Correct," I told him. "What do you want to do about it?"

His mouth set in a firm straight line, and I stared back defiantly at his level eyes.

"When you worked in my father's office I was in the South, so I really know very little about you, Miss Lane. You might be any sort of a girl in the world and still fool me. But I'll tell you what I'm going to do. I'm going to take a chance, Miss Lane."

"Miss Gray," I corrected him.

"I am going to take a chance and give you that letter. I will have it at your rooming house the first thing in the morning. Now I want you to do the fair thing with me. Tell me where you are going, and what sort of work you are going to take up."

"So you can keep an eye on me?" I asked him coldly.

"You can put it that way if you like, but it's really because I am interested in you."

"But I am not interested in you," I told him frankly. "I want no further connection with the Karby family, root or branch. I am giving you one chance to make amends in a very small way for your father's actions. You can do as you like about it. But I certainly am not going to keep up any connection, however indefinite, with you or your family."

The boy flushed and then, surprisingly, he smiled.

"You don't talk like a bad one," he said. "And so help me, I don't believe you are. I think you're a darned nice girl, Miss Gray, and I'd like to know you better. But if you say no, I presume you mean no."

All at once I sensed that peculiar, unmistakable vibration that always warns a woman when she has aroused deep feeling in a man. There is, I think, a subtle telepathy between the sexes, a wordless response that always reveals itself.

In the beginning, I sincerely believe Kenneth Karby was interested in me solely because of my connection with his father;

now, a swift intuition told me that he was interested in me, personally.

I was unmoved, unthrilled. Emotionally, I felt nothing. In common fairness I could not blame him for his family's deeds; nevertheless, there seemed to be a wall between us that nothing could break down.

The total effect of all this was to give me a sense of annoyance which fell a little short of sheer disgust. Good looking young men with amorous intentions were common enough in New York to develop in any fairly attractive girl a more or less constant attitude of defense.

"I think I will go home, now," I told Kenneth Karby. "You say I may depend on you to send me the letter of reference in the morning?"

"Absolutely, Miss Gray. This ends it for me, this is dismissal?"

I was keenly aware of my advantage.

"You ought to understand by now, Mr. Karby, that I mean what I say," I told him with a little feeling of satisfaction.

But men are not so easily discouraged. I saw his chin set a bit, even though he was extremely polite.

"As you wish, of course, Miss Gray."

We left the tea room and he accompanied me the few steps to my rooming house. That was all. The next morning, when I went downstairs, there was a long envelope addressed to Miss Savannah Lane. I opened it and found within a smaller envelope addressed to Miss Kathleen Gray and containing a letter over the signature of Kenneth Karby. It was the conventional letter of recommendation to a departing employee. Brief as it was, it served my purpose, and at once I mailed it out to Mrs. J. Arthur Gardener, at Zenith, Long Island.

Several days of idleness were upon me. When I awoke in the morning I looked at the world through new eyes, through the eyes of Kathleen Gray. Somehow life seemed more precise, more clear-cut. Deep down inside me the wounds were closing, healing. I knew a scar would exist forever, but the pain was melting away.

I had almost forgotten the twenty-five hundred dollars in bank notes concealed in my mattress—bribe money from John L. Karby. To Savannah Lane the sum had seemed important. In a vague sense I had come to consider it my own.

BUT Kathleen Gray would have none of it. She argued with me and told me that however I spent it, its influence would linger about me like unhealthy mist. Far better to stand, free and clear, on my own two feet, to drink deeply of the soul-satisfying draught of pure independence.

I ripped open the mattress, sealed and addressed the package, and without the slightest qualm, sent it back to John L. Karby. I am proud today that, even at that time, I was able to see things in a straight, clear light.

Later on came days when I saw life and money from a different angle, when I became a different girl from the clear-eyed Kathleen Gray. When I sent the money back to John L. Karby I looked into the future and saw myself, romantically, as a shining figure of rather frigid honor.

Monday found me at Zenith, Long Island. The Gardener chauffeur met me in a closed car, and I was driven a mile or so out into the country. Contrasted with my bleak home back in Pennsylvania, this place was a palace. The chauffeur carried my bag directly to the front entrance and Mrs. Gardener herself greeted me in the hall. My room was on the second floor at the far end of one wing; I had my own private bath of spotless white tile, with glistening fixtures. This was my first taste of luxurious living.

A maid helped me unpack, and presently my luncheon was brought and placed on a

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small table in my room. I asked the girl about the Gardener establishment.

"They've got oodles of money," she told me. "They're all right in their way too. Good to their help. Mr. Gardener made his money in oil, they say, and Mrs. Gardener dragged him East. She's trying to break into society, you know, but they're all right people at that, I guess."

I WAS delighted to find how the personality of Kathleen Gray slipped into this situation. She fitted like a hand in a glove. Her status was not that of a servant; she was more of a guest than otherwise. Later I went downstairs with Mrs. Gardener and met the children.

"Children," said Mrs. Gardener, "this is Miss Gray, your new governess."

Gravely, they shook hands with me, these little things, with a formality of manner far beyond their years. Mrs. Gardener was just going out for the afternoon, and I was immediately left alone with Janie and little David.

I had no instructions from their mother; by the terms of my employment she had, at a stroke, shifted all responsibility to my inexperienced shoulders.

Little David, after his mother had gone, looked at me with halting bashfulness. Then, suddenly, he rushed to me and threw his arms around my neck.

"I like you," he said in his soft, childish voice.

"And I like you too, David," I told him as I hugged him to me.

Janie managed to get both of her arms around my waist.

"You'll like me too, won't you?" she pleaded. "You'll like me just the same as you do David, won't you Miss Gray?"

Hungry, love-starved little things! Yes, love-starved, the three of us. Some new emotion surged within me, and my eyes were filled with tears.

"You darlings!" I said. "I love you both."

How quickly love flowered into full bloom that first afternoon we were together! My first day at the Gardener home carried me into a new world. The children and I found a shady bench on the lawn under a great spreading tree. New York, with its struggle and harshness, seemed a million miles away. We found some old school books and I began working with their little minds. Soon I was completely absorbed in the pleasure of teaching. Letter by letter we spelled out simple words.

Eager to please me, they responded with childish enthusiasm to the task which became more of a game than anything else. Then I saw their white-clad nurse coming across the lawn.

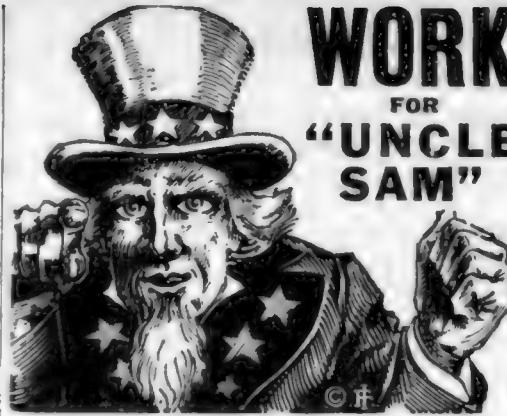
"It's three o'clock now, Miss Gray, and the children always take a nap at this time."

Reluctantly I surrendered them, and they left me with soft kisses on my face. After they were gone, a mild lonesomeness crept over me, but I was content to sit in the cool shade and relax. Presently, I thought of a shelf of books in my room, and walked slowly to the house. Inside the house I met, for the first time, an elderly woman with gray hair, a Mrs. Hanson the housekeeper, whose duty it was to supervise the whole establishment.

"Mrs. Gardener asked me to tell you, Miss Gray, that you were to make yourself perfectly at home. If you require tea, there is a bell in your room. You have the privilege of using the swimming pool; but I would suggest, as a matter of tact, that you select hours when the family or guests are not using it."

The swift, intuitive impression came to me that Mrs. Hanson was, in reality, the source of authority in this rather elaborate household; that, quite possibly, she was Mrs. Gardener's advisor in more ways than one.

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I thanked her and went up to my room. After dinner that night I saw the children again in the nursery for an hour or so, before they were put to bed. Of Mrs. Gardener and her husband I saw nothing, although the sound of voices on the first floor told me they were there with guests. If Mrs. Gardener had seen the children at all that day, I hardly know when it could have been.

With minor variations the first day was the model of the life I lived for days that stretched into weeks. Without any effort on my part, I came inevitably to be fairly well acquainted with the servants. Neither a servant, a member of the family, nor a guest mine was, perhaps, the most difficult position in the house. Certainly it was the loneliest except, of course, for the association with Janie and little David. I grew to love them deeply, and they loved me more than they did their own mother of whom they saw almost nothing.

The servants treated me with uniform courtesy, but they were not the sort of people with whom I could make friends. The butler, the chauffeur and a young workman who looked after all of the mechanical devices on the place, treated me with considerable politeness, even with interest.

A dividing line, of course, separated me from them but in the case of these three men I sensed a restraint that was more pronounced on their part than on mine. From time to time I saw them together, and somehow got the impression that they were secretly rather more intimate than their public manner would indicate.

OF J. ARTHUR GARDENER, the nominal head of the household, I saw very little. Like his wife he seemed content to leave Janie and David entirely under my supervision.

The days drifted along pleasantly. There was a rumor among the servants that when winter came we were all to go to Florida, but nothing unsettled the smooth running household. Guests were continually coming and going; several times a week there would be dinner dances and parties, but these were distinctly remote from my life and the life of Janie and David.

After the storm and strife of my unhappy scandal, this life was a still, peaceful cruise in untroubled waters. Day by day the two children and I drew closer together, and I consciously shut out all other interests in my life. My heart grew in tenderness for the little things. I was, I think, happier than I had ever been before in my life; I was a bruised and hunted thing that at last had found a safe retreat.

Then, like the bursting of a bomb-shell, all of my security was shattered.

Mr. Gardener walked out to me one day, when I was alone examining a rose-bush.

"Miss Gray," he said in his impersonal way, "if I remember rightly, you used to work for the Karby Real Estate and Investment Company."

I chilled suddenly. "Yes sir, I did."

"You knew Mr. Karby himself?"

"Yes sir."

"Know much about him? I mean what sort of a man he is to do business with?"

"I'm afraid I don't, Mr. Gardener."

"Well, it doesn't matter," he said. "I'm going to put this place on the market and I am going to let Karby handle the sale of it. As a matter of fact, he is coming out with his wife over the week-end."

He strolled away, his mind preoccupied, I suppose, with business thoughts. For several minutes I did not move away from the rose-bush.

The cruel irony of it almost made me ill. Yet, how naturally this catastrophe had come about. John L. Karby was one of the biggest operators in Long Island real estate. A large part of his business was the

handling of magnificent estates like the Gardener place.

Mr. Gardener had said the Karbys were coming over the week-end, and I realized suddenly that today was Saturday. Then they were coming today!

I was in a panic. If either of the Karbys saw me and disclosed my identity to the Gardeners, I would almost certainly be dismissed. My imagination got the better of me, and my heart wrenched painfully at the thought of separation from Janie and little David. Not only that, but my hurt had been so severe that I shrank almost physically from the thought of again facing the harsh, bruising realities of the outside world. I was happy here. My heart was at peace. I was a storm-driven ship safe, at last, in harbor!

Happily, a ray of hope came to me. In the past I had seen almost nothing of the Gardener guests and, with luck, I might, over the week-end, avoid the Karbys. Gradually, as I became more composed, I tried to evolve a plan of seclusion. My health had been perfect, yet there was no reason why I could not plead a temporary illness and keep to my room until they were gone.

Yes, that was it! My common sense told me that the chances were one hundred to one that the Karbys would never even suspect the notorious Savannah Lane of being under the same roof with them.

Nevertheless an unsettled spot of fear, like an icy area, remained in my breast torturing me with uncertainty. It was difficult to get my mind off the menace that had suddenly come upon me; the more I thought of it the greater it grew. The hour when I took the children, for the afternoon, out into a summer house on the lawn, was approaching. I realized this as I glanced out the window at a large motor car which was coming up the drive.

It was the Karbys!

The Gardeners came out of the house to greet them. I had time to note, before I drew away from the window, that young Kenneth Karby had not come with his father and mother.

I went at once to the little desk in my room and wrote a note to Mrs. Gardener, telling her that I had a severe headache, and asking her to allow the children to remain with their nurse. A maid carried the note for me, and presently came back with the word that Mrs. Gardener had said it would be quite all right for the nurse to take charge of the children.

A little thrill of success came over me. I have often heard it said that no one can plan a perfect crime. This strategy of mine was not a crime, of course, yet there was a weak link in my plans. I had not foreseen its most probable defect.

Before an hour had passed the children were in my room.

THE nurse had told them of my supposed illness and, childlike, they had insisted upon coming to visit me. As always, their childish sweetness worked a spell over me, and I forgot my fears temporarily. The nurse, a dull German girl, asked me if she might leave the room for a few minutes, and I gave her permission.

The three of us were left alone in my room in a remote part of the house. Here, I thought, there was practically no danger of seeing the Karbys. Outside on the lawn I most certainly would have encountered them.

A knock sounded on my door. I called out for whoever it was to enter.

The door swung open, and Mr. Gardener came into the room followed by John L. Karby!

"Miss Gray, I think you know Mr. Karby," Mr. Gardener said. "Used to work for him, didn't you?"

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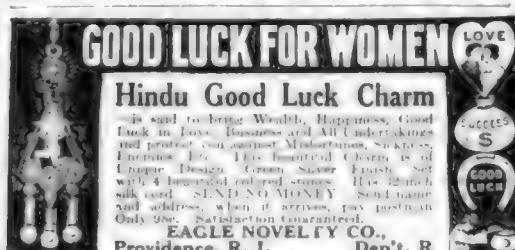


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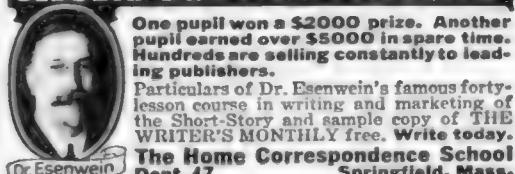
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Karby looked at me as though he were seeing a ghost.

"Miss Gray? Gray?" he said in a startled voice.

Desperation welled up in my bosom, and I looked him straight in the eye.

"I was employed by your firm some time ago, Mr. Karby. Perhaps you don't remember me," I said.

"You said the name was Gray?"

"Kathleen Gray. I am the governess here for Mr. Gardener's children now," I told him with what calmness I could summon.

Mr. Gardener, in his preoccupied way hardly noticed what seemed an insignificant interchange between a busy man and a former employee.

"Now, Mr. Karby," he said, "this room is one used either for a guest, or perhaps, a governess. It has a private bath and, as you see, it is well furnished. I want you to see the whole house, every room, so that you will know in detail exactly what this property represents. Now across the hall—"

Mr. Gardener stepped to the door, his mind already a blank so far as I was concerned. His whole attention was centered in showing the property to his real estate agent.

Karby's eyes had never left my face. The man was utterly astonished and, I think, shocked. He said not a word to me; indeed I do not recall that he even answered any of Mr. Gardener's remarks while he was in the room. Almost immediately they were out, and I had closed the door behind them.

Every nerve was quivering. I rang for the maid, and because I wanted to be alone, sent the children with her to their nurse.

Even now, I cannot imagine why Karby told his wife of my presence in that house but that was what he did!

Perhaps it was because he feared she might discover me herself and suspect him of collusion. In all probability it was he who had established acquaintance with the Gardeners, and with her temperament she might easily have suspected him of using this visit as a means for meeting me again. That may have prompted him, in a spirit of self-defense, to disarm her jealousy with the staggering announcement that I was in the Gardener household under the alias of Kathleen Gray. It would make him appear so innocent!

All I know is that, within the hour, Mrs. Karby herself came to my room.

"So we meet again, Miss Lane!"

I HAD to face her and I did. "Yes, we meet again, Mrs. Karby," I said.

"The name now, I believe, is Gray instead of Lane?"

"Yes."

"Are your employers aware of the deception?"

Her voice and her eyes were stern and forbidding. Behind this mask I could sense the cause of her ill will. For a brief time her husband had been interested in me. The thorn of jealousy was buried deep in her heart, and would remain there forever.

"Mr. and Mrs. Gardener do not know that I am Savannah Lane," I said. "They will never know it from me. Are you going to expose me, Mrs. Karby?"

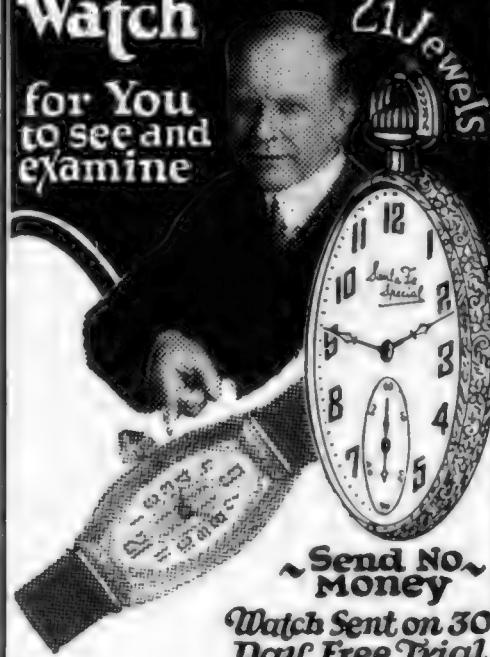
I asked her the question as bravely as I could. My heart was fearful, but pride forbade any humility before this woman. Mrs. Karby stood regarding me, coolly conscious that she held all the trumps.

"I should like to know your purpose, Miss Lane, in assuming a name other than your own, and establishing yourself in a household of this character?"

"To get rid of the connection with your name!" I told her with some heat. "The association was never a pleasant one for me, and I thought I would have a better chance

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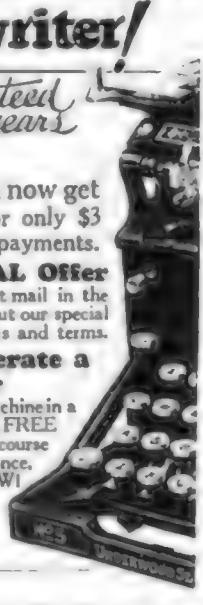
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by dropping it. Mr. and Mrs. Gardener seem satisfied with my services. That, I believe, is sufficient."

"You have nothing to gain by impudence, Miss Lane!" John L. Karby's wife told me tartly. "As a matter of justice to the Gardener family, I suppose I should go to them at once and tell them the whole truth. I don't say I intend doing that; but I may, unless I am satisfied that your employment here does not have some hidden meaning in it."

GRADUALLY I began to boil, but I held my tongue. One insult, more or less—what did it matter?

"I don't wonder you change color, Miss Lane," she went on. "May I presume to ask you if you were acquainted with Mr. Gardener before you came out here?"

"You have me at a disadvantage, and you know it!" I told her. "I'm very happy here, and I'm living down the scandal your husband brought on me. I'm doing a decent amount of good in the world by taking care of these neglected little children of the Gardeners. Your question about Mr. Gardener is an insult and you meant it to be! I did not know him before I came here; I see no one but the children, and if you have a spark of understanding or kindness in your heart, you won't persecute me any further!"

No one, hearing me, could have doubted the sincerity of my statement. Mrs. Karby's eyes did not change expression.

"There may be some truth in what you say," she admitted grudgingly. "You will understand, please, that I have no desire to hound you. I shall find out, indirectly, perhaps, whether you have lied to me or not. If you have told the truth you may rest assured that I will not put a straw in your way."

She turned and left the room.

All of my life I have observed that life is a cluster of events. At auction-bridge there is a run of the cards, a train of good luck or bad, which is entirely independent of the skill of the player. Troubles never come singly. Good things, too, come in bunches. When a run of fortune, fair or foul, starts, there seems no stopping it.

The spell of the Karby family, the perverse ill luck of that association, was still upon me. I stood alone in my room, desperately unhappy. I was at the mercy of Mrs. Karby, and something of her presence lingered in the room after she had gone. A chilling wraith of a personality that bore me no good will!

She had stood there, beside that luxuriously upholstered chair. Irresistibly, something drew me over to the spot.

There, down on the cushion of the seat, with a broken clasp, was the tiny diamond studded wrist-watch she had worn. It was ticking steadily!

The thing seemed alive, endowed with some spark of antagonistic feeling. The disturbing thought came to me that possibly Mrs. Karby had dropped the watch as a test of my honesty. Perhaps she sought to trap me and bring about my downfall at the Gardeners.

I picked the thing up and examined it. The clasp of the band really was broken. Common sense came to my rescue and I realized that, of course, this was purely an accident. Mrs. Karby was not a woman given to melodrama. Nevertheless, I decided to take no chances. I would trust no one to return the watch. With my own hands I meant to give it back to her.

I went out into the hall, and, meeting a maid, inquired the location of the Karby's apartment. The girl directed me to their quarters in my own wing, and on the same floor. As I turned the corner Oliver, the butler, moved soft-footedly away from a door. I had a quick impression that he had

been standing there listening, but the feeling was so shadowy that it impressed me scarcely at all.

"Are Mr. and Mrs. Karby in there?" I asked him.

"Mrs. Karby has just gone in alone, I believe," Oliver said. He looked at me keenly with his large, deferential eyes under dark, heavy lids.

I knocked on Mrs. Karby's door.

"Who is it?"

"This is Miss Gray. May I come in a moment?"

The knob turned, and Mrs. Karby stood before me. "What is it, please?"

"This." I held out her watch.

The surprise on her face was too genuine to be assumed. The dinner hour was approaching, and she was in a silk negligee preparing to dress. Directly behind her I caught a glimpse of jewels spread out on her dressing table, a confused impression of pearls and the flash of diamonds.

"Where did you get it?"

"It must have dropped from your wrist, Mrs. Karby. I found it in the chair you were standing by."

"Thank you very much, Miss Gray."

"You're entirely welcome." I turned away and started toward my room. For a moment she hesitated in the doorway and then stepped out into the hall, closing the door behind her.

"Just a moment, Miss Gray. I want to thank you for returning this watch, and I want to say something else to you, also. Of course a little incident like this is no true test of character. I should have discovered the loss of the watch immediately, and naturally would have suspected that I had dropped it in your room."

"I understand, Mrs. Karby," I said frigidly. "You mean to say that you are not giving me credit for even common honesty!"

"Not at all, young woman," she returned. "I assume you are honest enough about such things. I don't want you to think this little episode has swayed me in the slightest, but I have decided to give you your chance here. I have been thinking over our conversation, and I do not want to be in the position of obstructing your effort to reform. I am going to say nothing to the Gardeners!"

MY EFFORTS to reform! I choked down my wrath at her persistent attitude that I was a bad character. She assumed, and expected me to admit, I suppose, that I had been a bad girl! The slightest act of consideration on her part rested on the assumption that she was extending generosity to a culprit. Yet I had to swallow it.

"I am obliged to you. Is there anything further you wish to say to me?"

"There is, young woman. Be careful in the future to keep out of trouble. You have a natural inclination in the wrong direction, and it will bring you great unhappiness unless you make every effort to curb it."

I turned away from her indignantly and there was the sound of her door closing behind my back.

For an instant my progress back to my room was halted as I stopped to pick up my handkerchief which had dropped from my nerveless hand as I had stood talking to Mrs. Karby. As I stooped to pick it up I heard, from inside her room, a faint muffled cry of alarm. She jerked the door open, and rushed out into the hall. Her face was pale, her eyes burning.

"My jewelry! It's gone from the dressing table! Somebody was in my room a minute ago. I heard them leave and lock a door behind them!"

"Why, that's impossible!" I gasped.

Her eyes blazed at me. "While you were talking to me!" she explained heatedly. "You came to my door and rapped. Just

as I went back I heard another door inside my room close and lock."

"You had better ring for someone!" I told her.

She pressed a button with excited fingers, and I was sure she scarcely knew what she did.

"It was there!" she said, reentering the room and pointing to a door in the wall. "I heard it close and lock."

I went into the room, myself, and tried the door of a closet next the outside wall, overlooking the garden. It was locked.

"But, Mrs. Karby, that is impossible," I told her. "This door is locked."

"I know it," she snapped, "but whoever got my jewels went out that door!"

"Was it unlocked before?" I asked her.

"I don't know! I never used that closet, if it is a closet! Do you know where that door leads?"

"I'll see."

We went swiftly to the hall, turned an angle outside the room that brought us to the broad opening at the head of a stair case.

Beside an open window stood Oliver, the butler. A hinged screen was slightly ajar, and he was withdrawing a hand as though he had been reaching out of the window. At his back, set in the side of a wall, was a door leading, I imagined, to a service closet off the hall.

"Oliver!" I cried. "There has been a robbery! Does that door behind you connect with Mrs. Karby's room?"

Oliver's brows raised slightly, but there was no excitement in his voice.

"I believe it does, Miss Gray. It's a short passage, a hallway, which has been used, I believe, to store trunks for whoever happened to be occupying these connecting rooms."

He calmly closed the screen, and slipped the little latch in its place.

"Did anyone come out of that door and pass you?" Mrs. Karby demanded nervously.

"No, Madame," Oliver said. "I can swear to that. But I must confess a trifling indiscretion on my own part. A momentary desire to smoke a cigarette came over me, and I did a thing which I almost never do when I am in service. I paused for a moment by this window for a quiet smoke, quite sure that no one would see me. I took several puffs, and was just throwing the end of the cigarette out the window when you came upon me. I regret to confess this, but fortunately it enables me to assure you that no one, in the last few minutes, has come out that door."

AT THAT instant the maid came up, and Mrs. Karby turned to her commandingly. "Call my husband and Mr. Gardener at once!" she said. "Tell them I have been robbed!" The girl, with a startled face, scuttled away.

Mrs. Karby turned to Oliver, her face hard and set. "If no one has come out that door, whoever was in my room is still hiding inside that passage. I distinctly heard them leave my room and enter what I supposed to be a disused closet."

Oliver bowed slightly, put his hand on the knob of the door and tried it. It was locked.

"If there is any one inside, Madame," he said, "they will be captured at once, unless of course they have slipped out into your room while we have been here talking and made their escape in that direction."

"Miss Gray," Mrs. Karby said to me. "Go into my room and try that door. See if it's still locked."

I obeyed her instantly. The door was still locked. Without leaving the room, I went to the outer door and called this information to her.

"Stay right there and watch!" she ordered me. "The men will be here in a minute."

I heard her speaking to Oliver. "And I want you to stay right here too!"

"Certainly, Madame."

MR. KARBY and Mr. Gardener came hurrying up the stairs to listen, dumbfoundedly, to Mrs. Karby's story.

"You say both ends of the passage are locked?" Mr. Gardener said in amazement. "And you, Oliver, you happened to be standing right here, so no one could pass you?"

"That is correct," the butler said as I joined the crowd, drawn irresistibly by my interest in their conversation. "I have been standing here several minutes; long enough, certainly, to have seen any one had they come out. As I understand Mrs. Karby to say these things occurred in a very few minutes, if any one left her room by the inner door it is certain they are still in this passage."

His tone, somehow, seemed to imply subtly that Mrs. Karby might have been mistaken. She caught this and I could see her resent it.

"I am not mistaken at all," she said.

"The jewels are of considerable value?" Oliver asked her.

"They're worth fifteen to twenty thousand dollars!" Mr. Karby snapped. "Gardener, hadn't you better ring for the police?"

"I certainly had!" Mr. Gardener declared, astonishment still coloring his voice. "I never heard of such a thing. In my house! It's unbelievable!"

Again Oliver spoke up, as calm as before. "May I say a word to you, sir, since you are my employer? I am not quite so stupid as not to see that I may be suspected in this matter. It can easily be assumed that I had a pass key and was the one to enter Mrs. Karby's room. The fact that I was discovered outside this door makes it all the more suspicious. In justice to myself, sir, I demand that I be searched now and immediately. I wish at once to establish my own innocence. If I had taken the stones, the time is too short for me to have gotten rid of them. May I suggest, sir, that you and Mr. Karby take me into a room and search me thoroughly?"

"You bet your life you'll be searched thoroughly!" John L. Karby said in a grating voice.

Other servants began to group on the stairs, their faces startled with excitement and interest. Mrs. Hanson, the housekeeper, appeared and Mr. Gardener ordered her at once to summon the police.

"There are only two explanations of this," he said. "One is that Oliver took the jewelry, and the other is that another person, who is still concealed in the passage, has it. We will find out very quickly."

Again it was Oliver, with his unruffled manner, who spoke.

"If you will allow me, sir," he said to Mr. Gardener, "there is another angle of this that I suggest be investigated at once. I have confessed to the ladies that I was unfortunately, or fortunately, guilty of an indiscretion. I stopped for a few minutes in this secluded spot to smoke a cigarette, which I had just finished as Mrs. Karby and Miss Gray came upon me. I had, in fact, just thrown the end of it out the window. Later on, when everyone is calmer, that fact may recur to them and possibly some one might think I had thrown the stolen property out the window with a view to recovering it later myself. May I suggest, sir, that you send some one down to look beneath the window? I think you should do this because I am very naturally interested in clearing myself of the slightest suspicion."

His voice was so honest, and his manner so open, that he created a distinct impression of innocence. Yet, as I studied his

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face, there was something too smooth there, too bland.

"Mr. Karby, will you go down at once and look thoroughly under the window?" Mr. Gardener said.

Karby at once went downstairs, and Mr. Gardener sent one of the maids to summon several men from about the premises.

"I will have those doors open in a minute," he said, "and see if any one is hiding there."

It was Oliver who urged that the men arm themselves before forcing the passage, in the event that an armed criminal was in hiding. This was done and, in a very few minutes. Mr. Gardener himself, with a key from the housekeeper, opened the door while the young mechanic from the garage and the family driver stood behind him with drawn revolvers. The passage was, of course, empty.

Simultaneously, Karby came tramping up the stairs.

"There is no jewelry lying around on the ground below that I could find," he reported. "Around one of the bushes, in the damp earth, were a few tracks of a man's shoes, but that was all."

"The gardener's, no doubt," Oliver suggested.

We all looked at each other blankly; all except Mrs. Karby, whose eyes seemed to center on me.

"It was the cleverest thing I ever heard of," she said musingly. "Miss Gray, here, rapped at my door and held me in conversation for a few minutes—"

My employer almost rudely interrupted her with an impatient gesture of his hand. "I suggest you save all that and tell it to the police, Mrs. Karby," he said abruptly. "They will be here very shortly, I am sure."

"I certainly shall tell it all to the police," she told him with a snap of her jaw, her eyes still studying me.

Despite my innocence I felt that I must look guilty. Behind the woman's excitement I felt that her deep-seated dislike of me must be feeding the false suspicion in her mind.

At Mr. Gardener's suggestion, we went to our rooms; the servants to their accustomed duties. The men, I heard later, searched Oliver but found nothing. Alone, once more, my nerves began to throb with uncertainty. On top of the strain of the Karby's presence, this too awful incident was bringing me to the verge of a nervous upheaval.

In my own mind, confused as it was, the solution was not hard to find. There was mystery of course, but it was slight. Oliver

was the guilty man. He had loitered about Mrs. Karby's room awaiting his chance. While I was talking to her in the hall, he had unlocked the passage, slipped into her room, taken the jewels, glided out locking the door behind him. We had almost seen him throw them out the window. Almost certainly I could have sworn a confederate had been waiting below, or hiding behind a bush, to receive them. This, of course, was sheer conjecture; but it was the only explanation that seemed at all logical.

And I had been the unwitting tool of the thieves. Had I plotted with them, I could have played no more useful part than chance had thrust upon me.

No mental telepathy was necessary for me to read Mrs. Karby's mind. I could imagine with bitter reality what she was thinking. Already I was more than guilty in her estimation. And yet she was the one person who could save me. She was the one who could shield me from suspicion by the way in which she told her story to the officers.

Fear ran with an icy current through my veins, and for the first time in my life quenched my pride. I had to see Mrs. Karby at once! She was the only one who could save me!

I YANKED open the door of my room and sped down the hall. Once more I rapped at her door, and once more she opened it. Her husband was downstairs with Mr. Gardener.

"Mrs. Karby, you must let me see you! You must let me talk to you!" I cried. "You don't think I stole your jewelry, do you? Tell me you know I didn't!"

"I know nothing of the kind," she repeated. "It was a most singular coincidence about that watch. You called me to my door and held me in conversation at the exact moment my room was robbed. I do not say you were implicated, but I do say that the whole thing points strongly to your guilt. The police, I imagine, will have plenty to say to you."

"Are you going to tell them my real name?"

"I certainly am, Miss Lane. Why should I lie to protect you?"

"Do you know what this will mean to me?" I asked her.

"Do you know what it means to me to lose fifteen thousand dollars' worth of jewelry?" she demanded harshly.

I turned away from her in despair. My foreboding of evil was all too real to be dismissed as imagination. Disaster hung over me like a dark cloud; catastrophe was at hand. I felt it in the air, I breathed it in my lungs.

IT TAKES so slight a jar sometimes to precipitate a landslide! Yesterday I thought I had found peace and happiness at last; today I faced greater unhappiness than I had ever contemplated and I faced it absolutely alone. Why, oh, why did those hated Karbys have to cross my path again? Hadn't they hurt me enough? In June SMART SET I will tell you what happened when I tried to avenge my own wrongs.

My Bush-League Lover

[Continued from page 47]

"What do you think I've been doing?" I asked, heatedly.

That night, as soon as I could get away from my cage, I made George Blaine go for a walk with me. He wanted to drop into the movies, but I objected. I wanted to talk to him seriously, for in two days the first team would be leaving Lissom Springs, and I knew that if he didn't show great improvement right away, he would leave a day later with the second team. I

had grown to know that that is the beginning of the long journey back to where the recruit came from.

"You're not pitching as well as you can," I said.

"What's the difference?" George asked.

"Why don't you want to make good with the Trojans?"

"What's the difference?" he asked again.

I grew indignant at this attitude.

"You're downright lazy, George Blaine,"

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I said. I was really angry by this time. "Reckon I told you that about myself."

"You did, but that's no excuse. Why did you come down here if you didn't want to make good?"

"Reckon I wanted the trip," he grinned. Then seeing how serious I was, he became serious himself. "Maybe I can make you see how I feel, Miriam," he went on. "This here baseball don't mean much to me, exceptin' I like to play it some. You see, my pop's got plenty for me, an' I don't have to worry none about makin' money. So, if I like to play, I do, but I ain't aimin' to work myself to death over any game."

"That's just an excuse for laziness," I said.

"Reckon you might be right there," he agreed.

My indignation flamed afresh at this.

"You're impossible," I told him.

"Reckon you may be right," he answered, courteously. "Ain't it about time we turned back towards the hotel?"

WE WALKED back in silence, even though my heart cried out that I was being silly; that it made no difference to me whether George Blaine was lazy or not. Something, deep within me, whispered that I loved him; that it was not for me to judge the boy, but only to comfort him through success or failure, for as long as he might want me by his side. But I stifled those soft promptings, because I did not want to encourage him in his indifference.

It had suddenly become a challenge to me, this indifference, I wanted to shake him out of it. For his own sake, more than mine, I wanted him to become the success he had it in him to be. I really wasn't selfish about it for the selfish impulse in me was to smile and be friends with him. I craved to tell him that it made no difference to me what he did, which was the truth.

As we stepped on the porch, he bade me good-night courteously.

"This will be good-by," I said. "I never could endure a man who was so spineless."

"Reckon you might change your mind sometime. Leastways, I hope so," he answered and was gone.

That night I cried myself to sleep again.

I did not see George Blaine next day, because I did not have time to get to the baseball grounds. In the evening he came to my cage and asked me if I would go to the movies with him.

"I'm too busy," I said.

"I'll look for you when I get back. You might be more forgiving then," he told me, his smile just as friendly as ever.

The moment he was gone, I was sorry for letting him go, but I felt that my action was for the best. If I let him worry through the hour or so he would spend in the movies, maybe he would be more in a mood to listen to me later on. This resolve was strengthened by the remark Bill Mullins made to Artie Schwartz as they stopped for their after-dinner cigars.

"I've decided to pitch Blaine tomorrow afternoon against the regulars. If he goes the route, he sticks with the first team. Otherwise, he's through."

"I hope he goes the route, chief," Artie answered.

"Even if he doesn't, if he'd just show some signs of fight, if he'd just get sore at somebody, or try to dust somebody off, instead of being so infernally good-natured, I'd take him along," Mullins added.

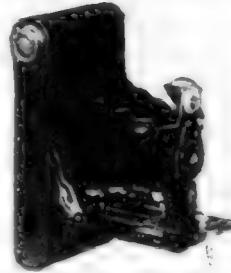
"He is too good-natured," Schwartz agreed, with a sigh of regret.

I was sitting idly on the porch, waiting for George Blaine's return, although I told myself occasionally that I was just sitting there because I wanted a breath of air, when Bradley Lord sauntered over to me.

"Lovely night, Miriam," he said.



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"anyway," I replied, but my heart leaped a bit at this. I did want to get back before George Blaine went to bed. I wanted, wanted badly to see him. Tomorrow would be his last day, tonight his last night in Lissom Springs. Still there was no use making a disagreeable situation worse. I could only hope that someone would be along soon to lend us some gas.

It was an hour before somebody did stop who could help us. The first car which passed disregarded our hail altogether, as did the second. The third stopped, but could spare no gas. The fourth managed to give us a couple of gallons, and the mere feeding of them into our tank through a thin bit of rubber hose required fifteen minutes.

Bradley Lord stepped heavily on the accelerator then and burned the road back to Lissom Springs, but for all his efforts it was after one o'clock when we reached the hotel. The porch seemed deserted when we walked up the few stairs, but out of the shadows a figure came and confronted me. It was George Blaine, transfigured; a George I had never seen. He was towering and blazing with anger and his voice was husky with emotion.

"So that's why you wouldn't go to the movies with me," he challenged. "Reckon I've been a fool to think I could make myself agreeable to a girl who has the run of the famous ball players."

"Steady, there, Blaine," Bradley Lord cautioned. "You're making a fool of yourself, but not the way you think."

"I reckon I need no advice from you, Mr. Lord," George Blaine said. "From what I've learned about you you're a heap-side more successful soothing ladies than you're going to be soothing me."

"I have no intention of soothing bush leaguers," Bradley Lord flung back.

The air was tense now with anger. I feared that any noise would result in one of the club scouts, or even Bill Mullins himself, discovering us there, more than two hours after the appointed bedtime for the players. Such a breach of training rules would not help George Blaine any, although it would not get Bradley Lord into any deep trouble.

"WE CAN talk about this in the morning, if it is necessary," I said

"Reckon there'll be nothing to talk about in the morning," said George Blaine. "You'll have time by then to fix yourself up a nice excuse, but it won't change my opinion any."

"And what might your opinion be?" demanded Bradley Lord.

"Out of respect for the lady's sex, although she has forfeited what respect I had for her personally, I reckon I won't put my opinion into words. It shouldn't be necessary."

"Your opinion can't matter to me one way or other, George Blaine," I answered.

"Look here, bush leaguer," Bradley Lord interposed. "I don't see why you should be entitled to any explanations, but since you've got such a rotten mind, I'll give you one. I took the lady out for a ride in order to ask her what I always wanted to ask her, to be my wife. And when you're back in the sticks, busher, remember that."

George Blaine bowed his head as though he had been hit with a heavy club. He stammered, huskily, before he could speak, and I was so aghast I could not say a word.

"Reckon I owe you both an apology," George Blaine mumbled, at last. "I can't be much more than a busher, at that, but I hope you'll take a busher's wishes for your joy and continued happiness."

He turned like a beaten soul and disappeared. Bradley Lord looked at me in a deep silence. I was trembling like a leaf.

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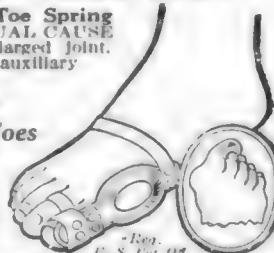
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"That goes, Miriam," he said, at last.

"Don't be silly, Bradley," I sobbed. "It's nice of you to want to make an honest woman of me, but you know it isn't necessary."

"I mean it, though," he said. "You might think it over."

"Thanks for the buggy ride, Bradley, and good night," I told him. "That's a nice gesture of yours, but it would make both of us very unhappy if we went through with it."

"You're the boss," he told me, "but don't forget the contract is open any time you want to sign up with my club."

As I started towards the door, he caught my arm and detained me a minute.

"Look here," he exclaimed. "If you're in love with that busher, I'll go and give him the lowdown on the whole thing. I'll square it."

I turned quickly towards him.

"And confirm his worst suspicions?" I asked. "If you say one word to George Blaine about this, I'll never, never speak to you again as long as I live."

"You're the boss," he said, again, softly. Then he lifted my hand gently and pressed it to his lips. I knew when he was doing it, that he did it so well because of long practice, but it was so gentle, so tender an act, that it stirred into a flood the well of tears already trembling in my eyes. I ran to the door and scrambled upstairs.

I was the most miserable girl in all Texas, if not in all the world.

Next night the Trojans first team would be leaving, within two hours after the practice game was concluded, and the rookies would track off behind the following morning. Once again Lissom Springs would be a dead, dreary place; and this time it would not be merely the departure of the gang which would wring my heart. The one man I wanted; the one who was the fulfillment of all my dreams, would be leaving with them, never to return.

I did not appear for breakfast or luncheon next day. I sent word to my father that I had a bad headache. Still, I managed to drag myself wearily out to the ball grounds and watch the game, the last game the Trojans of that year were to play in Lissom Springs.

It was like attending the funeral of someone beloved, I thought, as I made my way slowly to the diamond, and found a seat in the makeshift grandstand.

There was George Blaine, his shambling gait gone, his body alive with eagerness, warming up. It was obvious that Bill Mullins was following his plan, and that this was to be the last test of the young giant's possible greatness as a pitcher. I wanted to go out and say something to him. If only I had the power to encourage him, to tell him that he would make good, to put confidence into him, but that power, if ever I had it, had vanished in misunderstanding. He would only laugh at me, in that new hardness of his, and pay no heed.

SO I settled back, in misery masked by a fixed smile, to watch the game.

George Blaine was pitching for the rookies; and big Fred Wayne, the greatest pitcher in the world, had rounded out his conditioning work sufficiently to start the game in the box for the regulars. Certainly, the Trojans's manager was making George's final test as difficult as it might possibly be.

Three innings passed in drab monotony before I realized that here was something unusual in training camp games—neither side had scored. George Blaine's pitching was showing signs of that greatness which Artie Schwartz had said was in him, if only it could be brought out. Big Fred Wayne, of course, was performing with the sureness and easiness which had made him famous.

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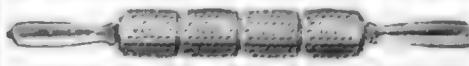
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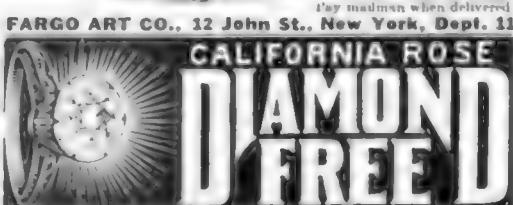
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Two of the recruits were standing near where I sat, idly watching the proceedings. They were already condemned to further seasoning in the minor leagues, and the proceedings had for them only an academic interest.

"That big boy Blaine sure is burning them in there today," said one.

"Boy, he is bearing down, ain't he?" the other commented. "And do you notice he is dusting them off, when they need it. Never seen him do that before. He used to just let you crowd that old dish right out of the yard for all he cared."

Perhaps I should explain that "dusting them off" is a baseball player's expression for pitching the ball right at the batter when he edges out of the legal space allotted to him at the plate and tries to rattle the pitcher by thrusting part of his body over the corner of the plate itself.

It is a dangerous thing to do, but it is necessary sometimes, because if a batter gets the idea that he can crowd the plate with impunity, he will do it every time. And then he has a great advantage over his foeman out in the mound.

The game went on, growing in excitement, although it developed into a straight pitching duel. The batters were helpless before the skill of the opposing boxmen.

"Mullins is going to call the game in the seventh inning, regardless, so the regulars can change and pick up what they left at the hotel and get ready in time for the 6.18," observed one of the rookies near me.

"Looks like he's going to call a tie game then," chimed in the other. "Way that big Blaine boy is going, the regulars ain't going to score on him."

The seventh inning rolled around and the rookies, first to bat, were snuffed out by Fred Wayne as easily as a man switches off an electric light.

"Ladies and gentlemen," the umpire announced. "The game will be called at the conclusion of the regulars' turn at bat, in order to allow the team to catch the evening train out. Manager Mullins wishes me to express publicly his thanks to the good people of Lissom Springs for the cordial welcome they have given the Trojans in their Spring training camp home."

There were cheers for this, but I was too anxious for George Blaine's final trial to help swell their volume. I was sure, now, that nothing but an utter failure in this last inning could keep him from going North with the regulars. And, although his going would mean that he vanished from my life, I prayed that he would come through his greatest test in good style.

It seemed as though my prayer was to be answered. The first two batters for the regulars was thrown out easily at first base, on puny grounders.

THEN one of those fits of unsteadiness which makes the difference between a good team and a great one seized on the rookies.

"Beau" Kelly, out in center field, dropped a fly, and Bob Ruch was resting easily on second base when he recovered it. Tom Dartley followed, hitting an easy grounder to the third baseman but he bobbed the chance, and the runner was safe at first.

George Blaine looked about him. For the first time that afternoon his eyes roamed the grandstand. They seemed to be searching for mine, for when they encountered my glance, a strange solemn smile settled on the big boy's face.

His pitching motion was as smooth as ever, but now the ball went wide of the plate. Once, twice, thrice—the umpire waved his arm at the fourth pitch and Eddie Phillips walked to first. The bases were full; and striding to the plate was Bradley Lord, the man who had led the league in batting for three straight seasons.

One of the greatest hitters the game had ever known; and the man, moreover, whom George Blaine believed was his successful rival.

It seemed too much to ask, that George Blaine would survive this crisis, but I held anxiously to my hope.

That cocky confidence which the true big leaguer always shows was marked in every move Bradley Lord made. He swung three bats, cast two away with an insolent gesture, and then stepped into the batter's box, his jaw set grimly. His body leaned forward. He was using every bit of trickery the experienced player knows, crowding the plate almost out of the yard.

George Blaine again looked in my direction, and as he did he smiled tauntingly at me once more.

His arm went back, his left foot raised slowly, his body coiled itself in gathering power. Then the ball sped away, like the flash of white lightning in the skies. I saw Bradley Lord, suddenly stirred into amazingly fast action, drop to the ground to dodge the ball which bored right through the space where he had been standing the smallest fraction of a second before.

He rose from the ground, slowly, brushed the dust off his uniform (this is where the "dusting off" phrase comes from) and resumed his position, again crowding the plate. Bradley Lord was not the man to be frightened out of his advantage by any such procedure.

A GAIN the ball streaked for the plate: again Bradley Lord dropped to earth in time; he rose, and again crowded the plate.

A third time it happened, but this time the batter was a little more respectful of the pitcher's rights.

"Three balls!" said the umpire.

"Looks like Easy Blaine's going to force in the winning run," observed one of the loquacious rookies. "He's wasted one too many on that bird."

Once more George Blaine went through his wind-up, the three regulars on the base lines scampering up and down in an effort to rattle him as he pitched. I held my breath as the ball started right at Bradley Lord, and watched it swerve with the suddenness of a darting snake, to cut across the outside corner of the plate.

"Strike one!" the umpire shouted.

Once more the ball started towards the batter, but this time Bradley Lord was set for it. Disregarding the baseball axiom that a batter should let two strikes go by when he has worked the pitcher for three balls, he swung. His bat just touched the white flash, and deflected it slightly.

"Strike two!"

Two strikes and three balls. The crucial moment of every baseball game. Three runners on the bases. The score tied; the last inning. And the greatest hitter in all baseball grinning confidently at the rookie pitcher, his waving bat seeming to dare him to pitch a ball within reach.

George Blaine paused, dramatically, at this moment. Once again he sought my glance with his own. And then, strangely, he touched the fingers of his pitching hand to his lips and waved them at me. He was throwing me a kiss, in derision, I thought, but I did not care if only he would come through this crucial moment creditably.

He examined the stitches on the ball with maddening deliberation, and then wound up.

I have seen speed; watched pitchers so fast that, as the players colorfully said, "there was smoke on the ball when it went past," but never had I seen so much speed as George Blaine unleashed then.

The ball seemed as small as a pea as it whistled to the plate. Startled, Bradley Lord swung his bat, but he was too late.

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The catcher was already staggering from the impact of the ball in his glove as the bat came forward; a sound like a rifle shot exploded in the excited hush; the umpire's arm jerked backwards in the signal for a strike.

Bradley Lord had struck out; struck out on a fast ball. And they had a saying in the big leagues, "Lord gets fat on speed. He eats it."

A glow of exultation flushed through me, and my lashes were wet with the sudden welling of faint tears of pride. I was glad, so glad, for George Blaine's sake. He had made good.

WHILE the cheers were still rousing the Texas air, I turned and walked quickly away from the scene of the shortened game. I wanted to be alone, so I rushed back to the hotel and hurried to my room. I could not bear the thought of watching the team depart. It would be too much now. It always had been a sad moment, standing on the single wooden platform which served Lissom Springs as a railroad station, and watching the train fade into the sunset. That was bad enough when friends were leaving. But when the one man I had found to stir my heart was going too, going off to the luxuries, and the charming ladies, and the great beauties of huge cities, I would not be able to stand it.

I flung myself into my room and buried my head deep in my pillows.

I do not know how long I lay there, face downward on the bed. On the porch below I heard the sounds of departure, the clatter of trunks being wheeled away to the truck for delivery at the station, the calls for this, and that, the hurried good-bys and promises of reunions next spring.

Next spring, I thought, bitterly; what can next Spring ever mean to me now?

Suddenly, I felt a tap on my shoulder.

"What is it, Dad?" I asked, springing up.

But it wasn't my father; it was George Blaine with that new, inscrutable smile on his face.

"I spoke to your dad, reckon it's all right with him," said George, softly, "so you better hurry and pack a bag, if you're going to catch the 6.18. They'll pack your trunk and send the rest of your stuff along."

"Along where?" I asked, stupidly.

"New York—"

"But—"

"Mrs. Wayne's going to have you in her drawing room until we hit Dallas," George went on, calmly. "We're going to fix a wedding up there."

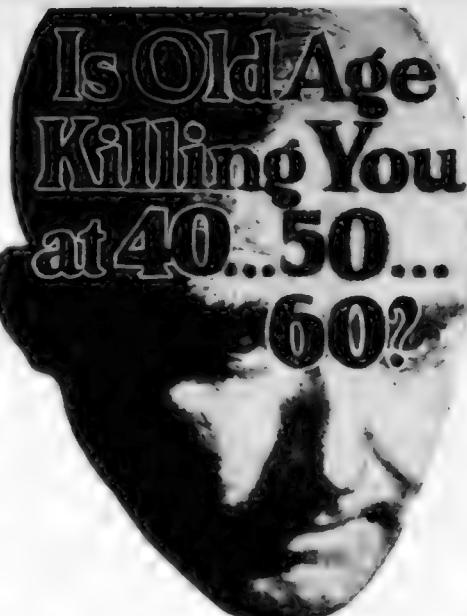
I was too startled and too thrilled to speak. This sudden over-turning of events, this converting of despair into the realization of my fondest hopes, was too much.

"Bradley Lord came around to see me after the game and told me you refused him. He wished me luck," George Blaine went on. "I thought I'd have time to tell you tonight, on account of expecting to leave with the rookies in the morning, but Mullins told me to hurry and come along with the regulars." He paused a minute. "I sure got even with Bradley Lord, though, dusting him off that way."

"You big goose," I said, half-sobbing, half-laughing.

His arms reached out and gathered me to him. And, oh, the dreams I dreamed as he kissed me, dreams of his greatness to come. I was going to New York at last, as the wife of a real big league pitcher.

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Love Double-Crossed Me

[Continued from page 55]

happened that a big car rolled up to my father's house and Senator X— stepped out.

I was thin and pale, and my heart was full of grief over Tom's death. But Senator X— did not show his hand immediately. He told my father he was a member of the same religious denomination and often stopped in at various cities to chat with its ministers.

He came again and again, and then at last he tried to make love to me. When I indignantly repulsed him, he laughed. He asked me if I wanted my parents to know the truth of my relations with Tom Marley.

FROM that hour on I had no rest. My secret in Senator X—'s hands was like a whip. My father, with his simple knowledge of men, was by this time completely won over to the Senator, whom he called a truly religious man and a light in politics. When the Senator suggested in the presence of my family that I come to work for him as a secretary, my father urged me to seize the opportunity.

I cannot tell you how I suffered. Sometimes I used to pray, and feel that God was punishing me for my wickedness, but at others I felt that though I had done wrong, and that I did not deserve what was happening to me now.

Sometimes I thought of telling my people everything. But when I really faced doing it, I knew I'd rather die first.

Then at last in my desperation I tried to devt the Senator. I remember that evening. I remember his cold voice as he called to my father and asked him to step into the room. I heard him begin telling the story I had confided to him. I cried out something, interrupted him so wildly, that my father stared.

It seemed to me afterwards that it was not I, but some one else with my voice, who had promised to be Senator X—'s "secretary".

Then I gave up. I felt reckless and bitter. This was just something I'd have to go through with. I grew listless. I didn't resist any more.

TWO weeks later I left for Washington. My mother must have thought the despair in my face was only sorrow at leaving my home for the first time.

"Good luck to you, Helen," my father said. "Now mind, if you need any help or advice, speak to the Senator. I know you can rely on him utterly."

I bit my lips to keep back a cry. Then the train moved from the platform, and a new life, which proved to be a sorry sort of life, for me, had begun.

It is difficult to tell the years that followed. I had thought after a few months Senator X— would be through with me, but there was a strange quality in his character. I think he did not tire of me because he knew that I hated him.

Once or twice I had hysterically begged him to let me go.

"You'll have to fall in love with me to make me do that," he would sneer. Then he would take me by the shoulders and kiss me, even while I shrank from his touch.

And now he had not merely my poor, broken love-affair with Tom Marley to threaten me with, he had his own mastery of me to add to it. Sometimes, just to torture me, he would pretend that he was going to write my parents the whole truth.

I thought no man had ever lived with a more evil heart. Perhaps I was right.

I went home often. Sometimes months would go by and I would not hear from Senator X—. Then all at once, a curt letter would come, commanding me to meet him somewhere. And I would go. I could not destroy the simple faith and joy of my father and mother in what they believed was my success. I was a slave indeed.

The one thing I longed for most, in all the world, was escape. You can imagine how I felt when at last I saw the chance to free myself from a man I hated.

It was at the end of summer. That fall Senator X— was to begin a big campaign to retain his political power, and I knew the contest would be a close one. He had been particularly irritable and nervous for months.

Like many men of immense wealth he had a number of homes in different places. Among these was a small lodge in the Adirondack mountains. He ordered me to go there and told me he would join me as soon as he could. It might be in a few days, or it might be weeks.

I knew that lodge. It stood three miles from the trail near a beautiful lake. At the far end of the lake was a hotel where supplies and provisions could be obtained.

The lodge itself stood in a clearing, surrounded by pines and ironwood trees. On the outside it looked like a pleasant little log-cabin. Inside it was furnished luxuriously with every convenience. Only a very wealthy man could have fitted it out like that.

I LIVED in that lonely, beautiful place, and hated everything in it. A colored woman cooked for me and took care of things, but even she had been engaged by the Senator. I felt that I had reached the end of my endurance.

And then the letters came! They had been written and mailed over the same week-end, three little notes, in Senator X—'s own sprawling hand.

They weren't the curt business-like letters a man writes to a secretary. They were the reckless, intimate outpourings of a man who has drunk too much to know what he is doing.

He had been staying with a big promoter and apparently the week-end had been hectic. He must have reached the point where he felt he had to tell someone, and he had sat down and written to me.

I think he must have imagined that he was absolutely safe. But he had plainly been too drunk to be cautious or clever. What he had probably thought was only a hint had come out as a bold statement. In half a dozen words I had the secret of a bribe he had accepted from a big corporation. In another chaotic paragraph I had the truth about a national political scandal.

AS IF mastered by one impulse he had poured out in those few pages every infamous and fraudulent act of his political career. It would be a slow-witted judge or jury that would not convict the man who had written those letters. They meant disgrace, impeachment, even jail. And this to a man, now running for office in the most difficult campaign of his life.

I did not realize the power that had been given into my hands, not immediately at any rate. It was almost a week before I realized what those letters meant to me. Then while I wondered at my stupidity in not seeing it sooner, the truth flashed upon me. They meant escape; they meant liberty at last. I could tell Senator X— I was done with him forever, and he would

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not dare to inform my people. I had a weapon with which to defend myself. I had secrets of his that were more dangerous than my secret!

Of course I should have returned to the city at once and placed the letters in the vault of a bank, or left them with a lawyer I could trust, but in my exultation I forgot the kind of man I had to deal with. I simply locked them in my desk, and waited with a sense of coming triumph. Now I longed for Senator X — to arrive!

And it was the next week that he did get there. He put up at the hotel on the lake and that evening came out to see me. His red face, with its prominent underlip and heavy jowls, seemed more brutal and repulsive than ever. He showed the strain of his recent dissipation.

It was almost twilight as he stepped into the room where I sat before the hearth, and came towards me smiling. But I stood up quickly, and at the look in my face, he stopped suddenly. It was then that I tasted my triumph, for I knew he already realized what I was about to say. And suddenly I only wanted to get rid of him as quickly as possible.

"What's the matter?" he asked, eyeing me with his cool hard glance.

"Nothing at all, only you and I are through."

"Oh, so you've decided to let me tell, have you?"

"No, you're not going to tell," I answered in a voice as calm as his own, though my hands were trembling. "You're not going to do anything except just go away."

"What makes you think so?" he sneered.

"Don't you know why?" I said.

HE CLENCHED his hands, and swore under his breath. Then he managed to smile.

"I suppose you think those letters I happened to write you are all you need. Why, what's in them, but a few indiscreet things, a couple of scandals, political secrets of no importance?"

"They happen to be over your signature. If I gave them to the managers of the other party in the coming election, what chance do you think you'd have of retaining your seat?"

He lost his temper then, and his face darkened. He brought his fist down with a bang on the table, and his eyes went peering around the room, resting finally on the desk.

"Oh, they're not here," I lied quickly. "They're in a safe place, and if I say a word, they'll be sent to those who want them as much as you do."

He got control of himself with an effort. "See here, Helen," he said at last. "I can't afford to have those letters unburned. What'll you take for 'em? I'll give you a good round sum."

"You've paid me already," I told him. "All I want is my freedom from you and I've got it!"

He didn't answer. He simply stood there, and presently a kind of grim smile crossed his face. It was menacing, and all at once I was afraid, without knowing why. Then without another word he went away. The next morning I learned that he was staying on at the hotel.

Then I realized I had been a fool not to send the letters away for safe-keeping. He was going to find out for himself whether or not I had done so, if I knew anything about him. And he'd stop at nothing. In my false elation I had thought mere threats would drive him away forever. Now I knew that the battle had only begun.

All that day I tried to plan. If I slipped away, he would have me followed. Wherever I went, an army of detectives would shadow me. I would have to face gangsters, crooked police, and lawyers who did

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his bedding. My flight would only confirm his suspicions and the letters would be stuck in his hands in a week. I doubted if I'd ever reach the city with them.

In my terror, knowing I had his privacies and

I did not even dare trust them to the mail. I felt that I must hide them here and at once. But where?

Not in the house certainly. And not in the woods where they might be destroyed by rain, or small animals. I had taken them from the desk, and while I still wondered, I continued to carry them about with me, night and day, torn by anxiety. How I longed for someone to help me! I felt weak and frightened, instead of triumphant now.

Then one day after I had gone up the lake in a canoe, I returned to find that what I feared most had begun. The colored woman had gone to the hotel for supplies. During our absence the lodge had been given a swift, hurried search.

That evening I thought I caught sight of a man called Williams in a boat on the lake. He was a sort of bodyguard of Senator X—'s, a silent henchman, who obeyed his orders, no matter what they were. I had seen him often, and I knew what to expect from him. I felt more frightened than ever. Bitterly I wished I had taken the letters away the moment I had received them. To have freedom almost within my grasp at last, and to be in hourly dread of losing it!

I felt that they would not hesitate to hold me up like thugs. Yet the house itself had scarcely been searched thoroughly.

The next afternoon my nerves were so on edge that I went out to take a walk in the woods in the hope of getting rid of my restlessness. As I walked, it seemed to me that the forest was full of peering eyes, or that I was being stealthily followed.

I took an opposite direction from the lake. I wanted to avoid the big hotel where Senator X— sat waiting, watching, with a kind of sinister patience.

I had gone almost a mile before I came upon Stony Creek. I was climbing up the boulders overlooking one of the pools, when a warning, "Shhh!" halted me.

A fisherman was just trying for a cast. I stood silent while he whipped the fly. His eyes glanced towards me with a friendly, amused smile, as if laughing at his own seriousness.

He was under thirty. I judged, with a lean, brown face. I thought he was homely, but with an expression in his eyes and about his mouth that was awfully likable.

Not making a sound, I waited. All at once his line sang out and his fly-rod bent. He spun the reel around, frowning hard. A minute of vigorous fight, and then a big trout came out of the water.

LEANING forward, I somehow lost my balance. I wavered for an instant. Then there was a sudden clatter as the fly-rod fell to the rocks. The fisherman leaped towards me, and caught my arm. He dragged me back to safety. He had saved me from what might easily have been a dangerous fall.

I looked at the fly-rod, where it lay on the rocks. The line floated idly in the current of the stream now.

"You've lost your fish," I said.

"So I have," he admitted. Then without knowing why, we both laughed. "Oh well," he said at last. "I've caught enough for today."

I started walking back towards the lodge, and in the easiest way in the world, he fell in at my side. His creel was over his shoulder, and with the rod, separated into joints, he parted the bushes for me now and then.

When a man shows he likes you, it's always flattering. I don't know why it was

that this time I felt something more than that. I kept looking at him, trying to decide whether he was homely after all. Perhaps he was. But not the same. I told myself, if I were a man, that would be the way I'd like to look.

Almost without knowing it, we were in the clearing where the lodge was situated.

He blinked at it. "You live here?" he asked.

I nodded. "Won't you come in for a moment? I don't often have the luxury of a visitor."

When we got inside, I called to the cook, but there was no answer. Then I noticed that the position of a chair had been changed. Next that the drawers of the Winthrop desk were opened and the papers scattered about in every direction. The house had been searched again. Noticing my look, the fisherman gave a little whistle.

"What is it?" he asked.

"I don't know," I lied.

"But—things look upset. You looked startled."

"Someone's been here," I said.

HE WHISTLED again. "Oh! Burglars! See here, I'll phone to the hotel right now for you."

"But why?" I asked.

"Don't you want me to notify the police?"

"No, it wouldn't be any use, that is, it doesn't matter," I stammered.

He looked at me with his puzzled, frowning glance. After a pause, he said:

"Does anyone else stay here? Your husband or—"

"I'm not married," I answered. "And I'm all alone."

He gave me a long steady stare.

"Aren't you afraid?" he asked. "Afraid to be alone—after something like this has happened?"

"Yes," I admitted.

He smiled broadly. "That settles it," he said.

"What?" I asked.

"Well, I don't know what it's all about," he answered, "but I've been camping down in the hollow. I've got a pup tent and some grub. I'll bring my things up here on your land back of the house this afternoon, before it's dark. You need somebody to look out for you, and I guess it's me!"

I felt so grateful then that I foolishly wanted to cry. I didn't know how to thank him. I wanted to tell him everything, and I couldn't. That made me feel miserable, too.

The next moment he had turned towards the door. "I'll have to be getting along if I'm going to shift my duffle up this way," he said. He held out his hand. "By the way, my name's Garth O'Malley."

When he had gone, I sat down and began to think. I don't know about what, only I felt dreamy and sad and happy all at once. And I kept hearing what he had said and the tones of his voice all over again.

Falling in love at first sight is the only way you ever really fall in love, I think, only you don't know you have until afterwards. It was a week before I realized what Garth O'Malley meant to me, before I knew I'd almost die for him because I cared so much.

That first evening I'd seen the light of his camp fire on the edge of the clearing and felt warm and comforted somehow, just knowing he was there.

The next morning I sent the colored maid down to the man in the tent with some jellies that I'd put up a month before, when time had been hanging on my hands. Later in the day Garth O'Malley came up himself.

He didn't talk about the apparent bur-

glory of the day before. It was as if he realized I didn't want to talk about it myself, but sprawling in the biggest chair, with a pipe in his hand, he talked of nearly everything else.

I didn't have much to say. I just wanted to look at him. I wondered how I had ever thought he was homely! He seemed so frank and good-natured, and so different from other men. He told me bits of his life, how he had run off to sea when he was a boy, and been stranded for a time in India. He had had scraps of adventures in all sorts of places.

"You see, I've had a good time," he said, smiling, "and that's all I've got to show for it. I suppose I'm what is called a failure."

"I don't think so at all," I told him earnestly, and he laughed at that.

He went on to explain to me that his uncle had died and left him a small fruit farm in California. It wouldn't bring much money, but he was planning to sell it. Then he'd find out what to do afterwards.

"And you wouldn't want to settle down on it and run it yourself?" I asked.

"It would be too lonely," he said. He looked at me, and suddenly I reddened, and my heart beat faster. Then the thought of all that was past came up before me, and I felt sick and ashamed.

But it was that very afternoon before he left that I found the solution to my present difficulty.

He was wearing a Norfolk jacket, and it had been torn under one shoulder. I offered to sew it up for him.

"I wish you would," he said. "It happens to be the only coat I own!"

He took it off and I went over to one of the windows. He was looking at the fire, smoking silently. I had a sudden inspiration. I took out the letters I carried with me night and day, and slipped them into the tear. Then I sewed them up inside! I'd found a hiding place I could trust at last. That night I slept almost peacefully.

Yet it seemed almost an unnecessary precaution. Though I found from inquiries I made to the colored girl, after her trips to the hotel for supplies, that Senator X— was still there, there were no further attempts to search the house.

The week glided along—that happy, happy week when one is really in love and scarcely knows it yet. Every day Garth O'Malley came up, and sometimes we tramped through the woods together or went fishing. When he wasn't with me, the minutes crawled, and when he was, the hours flew.

BUT all the time I felt miserable, too. I used to twist my hands together sometimes, thinking what life had made of me, and wishing helplessly I were a girl without any bitter wisdom, and that the past had been different.

But I couldn't lie to Garth O'Malley. All those last days the truth kept trembling on my lips, and then one day, with a white face, I blurted it out. I told him what I was to Senator X—.

We had been sitting before the fire. He had seemed unusually tender and gentle with me. I knew somehow he cared, too. But we couldn't go on. He'd have to know sooner or later. I couldn't be cynical with him and hide things. Somehow just knowing him made me want to be honest always. That isn't so easy.

After I had told him, he didn't say anything for a moment. He scarcely moved. Then he said slowly:

"I thought so. I heard X— was down at the hotel and I happen to know his reputation. That day I met you and we found the house had been searched, I thought it strange you didn't want to call in the police. Then I put things together, and—

well, it struck me what the mystery pointed to. One of X—'s women!"

He spat the words out with a sudden vindictiveness.

"You'd better go," I said as steadily as I could, "now that I've told you."

He looked at me for a moment before he answered: "Go? Why do you think I didn't go before?"

A little sob broke through my voice. "Then—then you don't hate me?" I faltered.

"I hate him!" he answered swiftly. "Why, the moment I saw you, I knew you weren't really that sort of woman. I knew it wasn't actually your fault. I believe in you, you see."

THEN, though I'd never been silly or weak, I couldn't help it—I burst out crying. Suddenly Garth swept me into his arms, and I put my head on his shoulder and felt his kisses on my wet cheek. And after a little, I did tell him how it had all happened.

Garth O'Malley heard me through to the end. His voice was low and quiet.

"I guessed it was something like that," he said. "I don't make mistakes about people often, and I knew I couldn't be mistaken about you. Well, Helen, if you think you can stand that fruit farm with me, we'll go out just as soon as you say the word."

"You'll really forgive me?" I asked, my voice shaking in spite of myself.

"It wasn't your fault," he said. "Besides, I've not been altogether a plaster saint myself, you know. I've done some things I'd like to forget. There's only one thing I haven't done."

"What do you mean?" I asked.

"Not broken my word."

I was to remember that later on.

Sometimes happiness is too deep to put into words. I think perhaps that hour in the lonely lodge was the most beautiful hour of my life. I had suffered and been wretched, so that joy was all the more wonderful to me. I had told Garth the truth, and yet he loved me. I was to have a chance for happiness at last. The whole future seemed golden and dazzling. I felt that I must be dreaming, that life couldn't be so good to anyone. When I looked at Garth's lean, brown face and clever eyes, I thanked God for knowing him and for the chance to love him. That he loved me was a miracle I had not dared to long for.

We made plans, the way people do who are in love. He seemed in a tearing hurry now to get away. Today, this very afternoon, he'd pack, and we'd go down the lake and get a car to take us to the junction. We'd be married this evening if we could find someone in the junction town. Then we'd go to my parents and after that, shoot on for the West.

"But I'll have to pack right away," I said. "We haven't a second to lose."

"Pack?" He made an intolerant gesture. "You're not going to pack anything. I don't want you to touch anything here—anything he's given you. When we get to the city, I'll buy you some new clothes and you can burn the things you have on."

I liked his saying that, because I knew that he loved me.

"I won't take anything then, except the letters he wrote me."

"Why take those?" he asked angrily.

"Because I've got to. You don't know how powerful he is. He could do us harm almost anywhere. And now it would be even worse, because he could hurt you, too."

He growled out that he could take care of himself. He was so like a small boy that I wanted to laugh and push my fingers through his hair. But when I told him where the letters were hidden he looked startled.



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He picked up a pair of scissors and got them out of his coat quickly enough. "If I have to take them, I'll take them in my pocket," he said. "And now get a hat and a coat and whatever else you need, and come on down with me while I get my own things together. You can ship your maid off to the city, I suppose?"

I nodded and went upstairs. I wasn't gone long. Perhaps I was too excited and too happy to know what I was doing. But as I came down in the moccasins I'd been wearing, I saw that Garth was at the wall-phone which connected the lodge with the hotel. At the first words I heard him say, a kind of rigidness went through my nerves.

"Is this you, Senator X—" he said in a soft voice. "Well, this is O'Malley. Agent O'Malley. I've got them. The letters, I mean. Oh, you're coming over to get them? I'll wait."

I don't know how to describe what I felt, the wave of despair that engulfed me. Only I felt suddenly sick and beaten. I wished with every fiber of my being that I'd never been born. What had I done that I should meet with this, what had I done? Once death had robbed me of my lover and given me into the hands of a cowardly sensualist. And now, when at last I had dared to believe there might be some happiness for me, when I had dared to believe that one man was better than all other men, this must happen! A tide of terrible bitterness seemed to sweep over my heart, and in my utter anguish and bewilderment and dismay I stood there, unable to speak, unable to do anything.

In the horror of that instant of revelation the light went out of my brain, and for the first time in my life I fainted.

When I opened my eyes, I saw Garth O'Malley bending over me with a glass of water in his hands.

I SHRANK back. "Get away!" I said hoarsely. "Oh, how can you stay here now! Do you even enjoy seeing the hate in my eyes, the unutterable loathing I feel for you?"

"Listen to me," he began. "I tell you—"

"Don't talk!" I broke out, "I'm sick of lies and of men. Lies, that's all I've had all my life." Weakness came over me, and I couldn't speak, but I met his eyes. His face looked grim. All at once he went over and took a chair by the fire.

And I sat without moving, without thinking. My dream was over, it had been too fine to last. But I dared not remember all I had dreamed, for fear I would go mad.

How long we sat there I don't know. Only at last I heard brisk, heavy footsteps outside. I scarcely needed to look up when Senator X—, in hunting clothes and with a rifle under his arm, pushed open the door and stared at me with a triumphant grin.

O'Malley had risen. He held out the letters that had been the price of my freedom. I saw Senator X— look them over for a moment before he tossed them into the fire. A flame licked them up, and they seemed to blacken and turn to ashes.

Then X— laughed. He turned back to O'Malley.

"A good job," he said approvingly. "I'd just come in from hunting when you phoned. Williams is coming along the trail. You can go out and meet him. I'll join you both in a few minutes."

O'Malley didn't move.

DOES a young and attractive woman, married to an elderly and wealthy man, always feel that she has missed something, even though she continues to admire and respect her husband? Was I a cheat when I stole an hour or two from my husband to give to youth and love—or was I a victim of June Madness? Have you ever had such an adventure as I shall tell you about in June SMART SET?

"What are you waiting for?" the Senator snapped.

"Because I'm going to stay here," he said.

X— gave him a quick, puzzled look. "What are you talking about?" he demanded.

"I'm not going," O'Malley repeated. "But you are!"

"What!" In spite of his anger, the Senator's voice was startled.

Then O'Malley said: "I kept my word, which is a little habit of mine. I got your letters back. Now, we're through. I'm not working for you any longer, I'm out for myself. From now on, you'll keep your hands off this girl!"

SOMETHING choked in my throat, a sob of relief and joy that no words could explain. It was back again—my chance for happiness! And back again, too, was the man I had believed in. I rose to my feet, crying out to Garth.

But he did not hear me, for at the same instant, Senator X— rushed for him. Garth stepped aside. He was smiling. He drove his fist home, and the Senator went reeling back against the wall. His face seemed purple with fury. The next instant he had raised his rifle and fired. I heard the bullet bury itself in the log walls. He lifted the gun to his shoulder once more.

How I did it, I don't know. But at the same moment, and before he could pull the trigger a second time, I had flung myself upon him, struggling wildly. He tried to get free, but before he could shake me off, Garth had wrested the gun from his hands and flung it with a clatter into the corner.

"Why I don't kill you, X—, I don't know," he said in a voice that was like ice. "But I'm going to talk to you if you're not out of your head. I've been mixed up with your dirty work for three years. I know enough about you to get you sent up. If I told, I'd get mine, too, maybe. Well, I've turned over a new leaf. I'm through. But listen to me, if you don't do what I say, I'll tell what I know, no matter what happens to me. Perhaps you remember that I keep my word."

Then he turned and walked swiftly to the opposite corner. He picked up the rifle and contemptuously returned it. "Here's your gun," he said. "If you try another shot at me, I won't let you off this time. Another case where I'll keep my word! I happen to have a revolver in my pocket. Now get out!"

I saw the look in Senator X—'s eyes, the utter humiliation and rage and defeat. He made for the door almost blindly as if to escape reading the happiness in our faces.

Then we were alone. And I heard Garth's low voice, his voice that seemed to caress me with its tenderness. He was telling me how he had agreed to get the Senator's letters back, thinking I was just someone who was holding them for blackmail. But he had realized his mistake when he had met me, and then, the most wonderful thing of all had happened: he had fallen in love with me.

What did it matter what he said, I told myself, for whatever he said, to me was close and whispered to me of the pleasant fruit farm in the West where we should presently go, to be happy together so long as each of us should live.

a love-song. I listened dreamily, happily, while he touched my hair and held me

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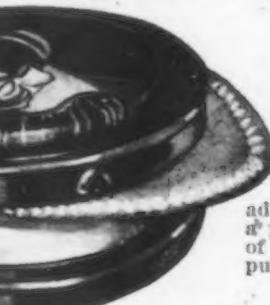
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